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SELECTIONS FROM THE WORLD'S GREAT WRITERS
ANCIENT, MEDIÆVAL, AND MODERN, WITH BIOGRAPHICAL AND EXPLANATORY NOTES
AND
CRITICAL ESSAYS
BY
MANY EMINENT WRITERS.

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R. Garnett.

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"THE PROGRESS OF LITERATURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY"

WRITTEN FOR

THE INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY OF FAMOUS LITERATURE

BY

ANDREW LANG

Author of "Comparative Mythology," &c., &c



ANDREW LANG

THE PROGRESS OF LITERATURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

By Andrew Lang

Contemplating the literature of the whole century, we notice how slightly new developments correspond to our arbitrary divisions of time, and perhaps we convince ourselves of the futility of literary generalisations The art of letters has, indeed, on the whole, and in the procession of the years, certain well-marked periods. Beginning with mere popular snatches of song, amatory, magical, religious, man advances to narrative lays of heroic adventure, and to the evolution of professional minstrels, and castes of hymn-singers The Epic, the Drama, Satire, are developed, then come lyrics of individual experience, while, in the region of prose, and after the discovery of writing, the brief notes of annalists expand into history; philosophy turns from semi-religious verse to pedestrian measures, and written criticism comes last of all. Greece, Rome, the mediæval and the modern world all exhibit this natural process But the full round once accomplished, the literature of a given century, say the nineteenth, depends for its character on forces which we can but partially estimate.

It has been a century of Revolution, of social and political unrest, of almost miraculous development in physical science, and in power of directing mechanically the forces of nature. Such a chaos of new ideas *may* take form in literature, but most of the ideas will be too raw for artistic expression. Thus the motive of Evolution, as formulated by Darwin, is revolutionary, and is grandiose, but in literature it does but tinge the thought of

Tennyson, or extract the sharper whine from the many minor poets of cheap pessimism. The socialistic idea, no less vast, has but inspired William Morris, among notable English poets, and less formally sounds in some pieces of Shelley Meanwhile the mechanical knowledge of the time is hostile to literature, because it is hostile to leisure and to loneliness. Yearly, we become more hurried, more gregarious, and more apt to depend absolutely on newspapers for our reading

Perhaps this may be the cause of the degeneracy of literature since 1860. After the great generation of 1790-1820, in England, after Wordsworth, Scott, Shelley, Coleridge, Byron, Keats, came a day of small things, followed by the period of Tennyson, Browning, Carlyle, and Matthew Arnold In America, all the classical writers in prose and verse—Hawthorne, Poe, Longfellow, Lowell, Emerson, Prescott, Motley, Holmes, and others—were contemporary with Dickens, Thackeray, and the Victorian authors already named. Since 1860, the stars of Rossetti, Swinburne, and a crowd of novelists arose, and for the most part set, in England, where we have no new poet high in the second rank, and no prose writer of the charm and distinction of Mr Stevenson In America, too, there is no Hawthorne or Poe, no Emerson or Longfellow. There is a fairly high level of merit, accompanied by much conscientious reflection on "art" and method, but we see no pre-eminent genius, among all the schools of experiment. The same rule applies to continental literature "Decadence" and reaction from Decadence (as in M Rostand), "Realism" and reaction from Realism; social philosophies striving to take literary form (as in Tolstoi); theories, and contending critical slogans meet us everywhere, but we find little spontaneous genius, little permanent excellence

Why is this so? Our hurry and confusion help to make us barren, our neglect of serious study of the classics in dead and living languages helps to make our authors ephemeral, mere creatures of the day, but causes which we can never hope to estimate are yet more potent Persons of genius happen not to be born So it was, with rare exceptions, between Pope and Burns We

can know no more, but do not let us shut ourselves into the belief that our mediocre talents are miracles of genius

Though now we are "waiting for the fountain to arise," our century has been notable in letters. A man who died in 1800 had never a chance to read the Waverley Novels, *Vanity Fair*, *Esmond*, *Pickwick*, much of Wordsworth, all of Byron, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne He was unconscious of Poe, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Emerson, Carlyle, Ruskin, Hugo, Musset, Dumas, George Sand, Heine, Lamartine, Turguenieff, Daudet, and was innocent of Zola, to take only a few names Great regions of philosophy, poetry, humour, were closed to him, which are open to us Many musical voices, as of "all the angels singing out of heaven," had not yet been raised Our familiar quotations, our household words, were, many of them, not yet uttered The romance of the Middle Ages was a sealed book, practically, till Walter Scott opened it, as William of Deloraine opened the book of the buried wizard, and Alexandre Dumas turned over other pages full of as potent spells The poetic secret of nature was waiting for Wordsworth: the inner charm of words, of verbal music, frozen by a century of common sense, was to be freed by Keats, Coleridge, Shelley, and Tennyson The pity and the humour of the poor (the pity and tragedy already revealed by Crabbe) were to be made common knowledge by Dickens, Barrie, and an army of followers. The treasures of local and provincial literature had been revealed by Burns, but more were to be brought out from a hundred rural places The comedy and tragedy of society expected Thackeray to renew the exploits of Fielding The whole province of æsthetics was to be refreshed, and to flower quaintly under the showers of Mr Ruskin's eloquence. The art of poetry was to be revolutionised, so that the verse of Pope and of Johnson should fall into unmerited disdain. Only the stage, for social reasons, probably, was to yield place, as far as literary merit is concerned, to the novel. The novel was almost to overrun the whole field of letters, so that "poetry is a drug," and the essayist prattles unheeded.

In History the man who died in 1800 missed Hallam, Macaulay,

Grote, Thirlwall, Freeman, Froude, Motley, Prescott, Bancroft, Fustel de Coulanges, Michelet, Mommsen, Sismondi, Ranke, Henri Martin—one does not know where to stop—and he missed, of course, our learned Gardiner, Stubbs, and all the new explorers of documents We are only beginning to come into the treasures of the Vatican, of Venice, of Foreign Offices, of the charter chests, and muniment rooms. Our dead man of 1800 knew only the beginnings of our science of institutions, of anthropology, of comparative philology, the sciences of Mr. Tylor, Maclennan, Maine, Grimm, Brinton, Fiske, Von Maurer, Réville, Spencer, Renan, Maspero, Max Muller Their name is legion, but here we are on the debatable land between science and literature

Enfin, though he had good letters in abundance, and read much that is now unfortunately neglected, the dead man of 1800 missed a vast opulence of knowledge, style, beauty, and mirth, which he could have entered upon merely by living for another hundred years Whatever evil men yet unborn may say of our century, they cannot deny to it the laurel.

There are drawbacks, of course As to knowledge, much of it is premature speculation. Like other ages, ours thinks it has discovered "the secret," in a dozen provinces where (we are beginning to learn) the secret is yet to seek. Our secret has usually been one or other statement of Materialism, one or other exposition of scepticism. The next century, if it comes to know more than we, will be very apt to reverse a number of popular verdicts Oriental archæology, anthropology, experimental psychology, may check or divert the present march of Biblical and Homeric criticism, and of religious and psychological science A period of hope may even succeed a period of negation, and another note than that of wistful pessimism may come to sound in poetry. Great stores of "realism," "naturalism," Ibsenism, decadence, and art according to Maeterlinck, have been "unloaded" on a public which, lectured out of its natural human tastes, is already reverting to them Theories of literary art have been based by moderns and on the mood of the passing moment, to the neglect of the ages The dismal commonplace has now been advertised as our only theme, while, again, we

have been drugged with the abnormal, the hysterical, the morally and psychologically aberrant. These new metaphysics of literature are based on sheer ignorance and mental shortness of sight. The moment can hardly be a law to itself, much less can it be a law to the future

The next century, nay, next year or next month, is the waste-paper basket of our fine, new theories Our modish originalities of morbid fiction, our novels with a purpose, our versified lamentations, our much advertised rhetoric, and popular fustian, to-day are, and to-morrow are cast into the oven. In thirty years there will be no such editions of our "Boomsters,"—our clamorously applauded and woefully ignorant dealers in fiction,—as to-day there are of Scott, Miss Austen, Fielding, Hawthorne, Dickens, and Thackeray. Our new poets last about three months, and will not survive to a tenth edition. The new age will thoroughly purge the garner, and huge stacks of our chaff will be cast into the fire. Herrick and Carew will outlast the famed Mr. A., and the entrancing Mr B. I am tempted to venture on the prophetic; to try to see what will endure, out of our contemporary abundance. But we cannot be particular without being personal, nor is the practice of prophecy entirely free from danger

There is undeniable danger to letters in the multitude of readers A public pasturing on illustrated monthly miscellanies of trash, and listening to critical whipper-snappers preaching in columns of literary notes, demands the "spicy." Authors, with a natural human anxiety to gain dollars, are tempted to appeal to this great thoughtless unlearned public. The peril is conspicuous, but mankind is so fashioned that true excellence will not make its appeal in vain. Give us a Shakespeare or a Scott, and he will not miss his reward, neither will such a genius stoop to be merely "spicy," eccentric, or declamatory, for the sake of lucre. Only the minor talents squander themselves on voluble appeals to the tasteless, and rely on the arts of the paragraph and the interview. Many noble examples in our age, as of Tennyson, Carlyle, and (if we may mention the living), Mr. George Meredith, prove that genius will prefer neglect to advertisement, will take its own

path, and, shunning the beaten road, and the clamorous booths of charlatans, will await its day. The much-talked-of "artistic conscience" is more than a phrase, though "stained by all ignoble use"

To end, the earlier and the middle century seems richer than the closing quarter in eminent names, in works which will endure So we think, even after discounting the natural, almost inevitable blindness to contemporary excellence, a blindness which is a check on the no less natural tendency to exalt, as Homer says, "the song which comes newest to our ears," the song, or the story, the essay or the play. But, even while holding that "the old is better," every reader of sense will admit the existence of multitudes of contemporary writers honourably good and pleasing, and to be distinguished from the ranters of the novel, from the affected "stylists," from the prurient "dukes of dark corners," from the fashioners of modish æsthetics These microbes ravage our newest literature, but they must pass, like other plagues in other and older literatures They are as well known to the literary critic as the locust, the mouse, the phylloxeia, and grouse-disease, to other experts They work ruin for their allotted space, but the type attacked survives, and the pestilent things which prey on it disappear. In letters, as in all things, excellence endures from of old, and as of old; pretence, *reclame*, affectation, perish. *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*

If we ask ourselves how the literature of the nineteenth is distinguished from that of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a formal difference at once presents itself. Our century has seen literature become a profession. In the seventeenth century men wrote because they had, or thought they had something to say, took pleasure in the work, and hoped for fame. Money was only considered by the booksellers' hacks, who had begun to exist as early as the Reformation. Writers for the stage made a little money, very little, and the booksellers kept their "hands" from starving, but Milton, Walton, Lovelace, Clarendon, and the divines did not write for pay. By Dryden's time, profit began to accrue, or place, but Pope had to secure his

gains by the method of subscription. In the eighteenth century we know how scanty were the earnings of Dr. Johnson and of Burns The golden age of "places" for the wits ended with the death of the last Stuart and the coming of the first George. Probably Scott first proved that something more than a competence might be earned with the pen, and literature became a paying profession As such it is plied with an almost plodding industry. We may rejoice the Muses need no longer shiver, as in Theocritus, but nobody can maintain that the literary art flourishes better in proportion as the commercial element increases The author may be more comfortable and more independent, but he is not, on that account, a better author He finds it more difficult to come "through his horses" to the front, in the race for recognition, as the course is crowded by innumerable jades, attracted by the rare prizes of success Yet the multitude of critics, all on the outlook for some new thing, partly neutralises the effects of over-crowding, and Mr Kipling, arrived almost as an unknown lad from India, had not to wait long for popularity.

The note of the early century was that of emancipation from "rules" which had always been conventional, the rules of French criticism under Louis XIV. The note of the closing century is emancipation from certain human decencies The trammels which were not felt by Æschylus and Sophocles, by Homer and Virgil, are too galling for young persons anxious to dilate on "problems of sex" This, too, is only a passing phase The old æsthetic controversies are reopened, the questions of naturalism, realism, idealism: and critics ignorant of literature cry for a kind of literary photography, for the stern reproduction in art of all that we avert our eyes from in nature These are new discussions, Athens was familiar with them, and they will be settled, as of old, by the common wisdom of mankind Meanwhile we must endure constant exhibitions of crude and one-sided experiments, "symbolism," adventures in odd metres, tales without beginning, or end, or interest, uncouth attempts at phonetic reproduction of rude dialects, mincing euphuisms miscalled "style," and many

other tribulations, among them flocks of imitations of everything that has a week's success. Many of the productions of recent literature are, like the fantastic animals, nature's experiments, which lived before earth was fit for human habitation. They are "neither fish, nor flesh, nor good red herring," they spring from the mental ferment of people determined, at all hazards, to be "new." We ought to aim at excellence of matter and form, and we may be content to think that all goodness of form is old, and is not fantastic. Not novelty of method, not contortions, not convulsions, produce work which is good and will last, only genius and labour can do that. Literature is not an affair of fashion, like the costume of ladies; we are not to ask whether realism, or romance is "in," whether the "short story" is in demand, or weak on a falling market. Authors are not milliners, authors worth reckoning with obey a law stronger than the vagaries of vogue. The business of readers is to be deaf to the cries of the market, to peruse what is old and seasoned, and so to judge the quality of what is still in the gloss of freshness Literature did not begin with Rossetti, Tolstoi, Verlaine, or Ibsen. *Vixere fortes ante* these distinguished masters, and the twentieth century, if it is wise, will not confine itself to the literature of the twentieth century. Few things have more seriously injured the taste of the last twenty-five years, than the common ignorance of all that was written by mankind before 1870 It has been a great century in letters, but its earlier glories are little studied (with a few exceptions), and the literature of the moment is only in one way encouraging. It cannot well be worse: it is the dark hour before the dawn.

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OF

FAMOUS LITERATURE.

THOUGHTS IN THE CLOISTER AND THE CROWD.

By ARTHUR HELPS

[Sir Arthur Helps, English man of letters, was born at Streatham, July 10, 1813; graduated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was private secretary to the chancellor of the exchequer, and to the Irish secretary; in later life, clerk to the Privy Council He published "Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd" (1835); "The Claims of Labor" (1844); "Friends in Council" (1847–1859); "The Conquerors of the New World and their Bondsmen" (1848–1852); "The Spanish Conquest in America" (1855–1861); biographies of Las Casas, Columbus, Pizarro, and Cortes, "Thoughts upon Government" (1872); "Realmah" (1869), "Talks about Animals and their Masters" (1873); "Social Pressure" (1875). He died March 7, 1875.]

The world will find out that part of your character which concerns it: that which especially concerns yourself, it will leave for you to discover.

The step from the sublime to the ridiculous is not so short as the step from the confused to the sublime in the minds of most people, for the want of a proper standard of comparison. We always believe the clouds to be much higher than they really are, until we see them resting on the shoulders of the mountains.

There is no occasion to regard with continual dislike one who had formerly a mean opinion of your merits; for you are never so sure of permanent esteem as from the man who once esteemed you lightly, and has corrected his mistake — if it be a mistake.

A friend is one who does not laugh when you are in a ridiculous position. Some may deny such a test, saying that if a man have a keen sense of the ridiculous, he cannot help being amused, even though his friend be the subject of ridicule. No, — your friend is one who ought to sympathize with you, and not with the multitude.

You cannot expect that a friend should be like the atmos-

phere, which confers all manner of benefits upon you, and without which indeed it would be impossible to live, but at the same time is never in your way.

It would often be as well to condemn a man unheard as to condemn him upon the reasons which he openly avows for any course of action.

The apparent foolishness of others is but too frequently our own ignorance, or, what is much worse, it is the direct measure of our own tyranny.

When the subtle man fails in deceiving those around him, they are loud in their reproaches; when he succeeds in deceiving his own conscience, it is silent. The last is not the least misfortune, for it were better to make many enemies than to silence one such friend.

It is quite impossible to understand the character of a person from one action, however striking that action may be.

The youngest mathematician knows that one point is insufficient to determine a straight line, much less anything so curvelike as the character even of the most simple and upright of mankind.

If you are obliged to judge from a single action, let it not be a striking one.

Men rattle their chains—to manifest their freedom.

The failure of many of our greatest men in their early career—a fact on which the ignorant and weak are fond of vainly leaning for support—is a very interesting subject for consideration.

The rebelliousness of great natures is a good phrase, but I fear it will not entirely satisfy all our questionings. It has been said that if we could, with our limited capacities and muffled souls, compare this life and the future, and retain the impression, that our daily duties here would be neglected, and that all below would become "weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable." Now may not the pursuit of any particular study or worldly aim become to the far-seeing genius disgusting in the same way? May he not be like one on a lofty rock, who can behold and comprehend all the objects in the distance, can thence discover the true path that leadeth to the glad city, but, from his very position, cannot without great pain and danger scrutinize the ground immediately under him? Many fail

from the extent of their views. "Nevertheless," as Bacon says, "I shall yield, that he that cannot contract the sight of his mind, as well as disperse and dilate it, wanteth a great faculty."

There is another cause of failure that has not often been contemplated. The object may be too eagerly desired ever to be obtained. Its importance, even if it be important, may too often be presented to the mind. The end may always appear so clearly defined that the aspirant, forgetting the means that are necessary, forgetting the distance that must intervene, is forever stretching out his hand to grasp that which is not yet within his power. The calm exercise of his faculties is prevented, the habit of concentrating his attention is destroyed, and one form under a thousand aspects disturbs his diseased imagination. The unhappy sailor thinks upon his home, and the smiling fields, and the village church, until he sees them forever pictured in the deep, and with folded arms he continues to gaze, incapable alike of thought or action. This disease is called the calenture. *There is an intellectual calenture.*

Few have wished for memory so much as they have longed for forgetfulness.

Perhaps it is the secret thought of many, that an ardent love of power and wealth, however culpable in itself, is nevertheless a proof of superior sagacity. But in answer to this, it has been well remarked that even a child can clench its little hand the moment it is born; and if they imagine that the successful at any rate must be sagacious, let them remember the saying of a philosopher, *that the meanest reptiles are found at the summit of the loftiest pillars.*

The Pyramids! What a lesson to those who desire a name in the world does the fate of these restless, brick-piling monarchs afford! Their names are not known, and the only hope for them is that by the labors of some cruelly industrious antiquarian they may at last become more *definite* objects of contempt.

We talk of early prejudices, or the prejudices of religion, of position, of education; but in truth we only mean the prejudices of others. It is by the observation of trivial matters that the wise learn the influence of prejudice over their own minds at all times, and the wonderfully molding power which those

minds possess in making all things around conform to the idea of the moment. Let a man but note how often he has seen likenesses where no resemblance exists; admired ordinary pictures, because he thought they were from the hands of celebrated masters; delighted in the commonplace observations of those who had gained a reputation for wisdom; laughed where no wit was; and he will learn with humility to make allowance for the effect of prejudice in others.

In a quarrel between two friends, if one of them, even the injured one, were, in the retirement of his chamber, to consider himself as the hired advocate of the other at the court of wronged friendship; and were to omit all the facts which told in his own favor, to exaggerate all that could possibly be said against himself, and to conjure up from his imagination a few circumstances of the same tendency; he might with little effort make a good case for his former friend. Let him be assured that whatever the most skillful advocate could say, his poor friend really believes and feels; and then, instead of wondering at the insolence of such a traitor walking about in open day, he will pity his friend's delusion, have some gentle misgivings as to the exact propriety of his own conduct, and perhaps sue for an immediate reconciliation.

There are often two characters of a man — that which is believed in by people in general, and that which he enjoys among his associates. It is supposed, but vainly, that the latter is always a more accurate approximation to the truth, whereas in reality it is often a part which he performs to admiration; while the former is the result of certain minute traits, certain inflections of voice and countenance, which cannot be discussed, but are felt as it were instinctively by his domestics and by the outer world. The impressions arising from these slight circumstances he is able to efface from the minds of his constant companions, or from habit they have ceased to observe them.

We are pleased with one who instantly assents to our opinions; but we love a proselyte.

The accomplished hypocrite does not exercise his skill upon every possible occasion for the sake of acquiring facility in the use of his instruments. In all unimportant matters, who is more just, more upright, more candid, more honorable?

Those who are successfully to lead their fellow-men should

have once possessed the nobler feelings. We have all known individuals whose magnanimity was not likely to be troublesome on any occasion; but then they betrayed their own interests by unwisely omitting the consideration that such feelings might exist in the breasts of those whom they had to guide and govern: for they themselves cannot even remember the time when in their eyes justice appeared preferable to expediency, the happiness of others to self-interest, or the welfare of a state to the advancement of a party.

The ear is an organ of finer sensibility than the eye, according to the measurement of philosophers.

Remember this, ye diplomatists: there are some imperturbable countenances, but a skillful ear will almost infallibly detect guile.

It is a shallow mind that suspects or rejects an offered kindness because it is unable to discover the motive. It would have been as wise for the Egyptians to have scorned the pure waters of the Nile, because they were not quite certain about the source of that mighty river.

Misery appears to improve the intellect, but this is only because it dismisses fear.

Intellectual powers may dignify, but cannot diminish, our sorrows; and when the feelings are wounded, and the soul is disquieted within you, to seek comfort from purely intellectual employments is but to rest upon a staff which pierces rather than supports.

When your friend is suffering under great affliction, either be entirely silent, or offer none but the most common topics of consolation. For in the first place they are the best; and also from their commonness they are easily understood. Extreme grief will not pay attention to any new thing.

When we consider the incidents of former days, and perceive, while reviewing the long line of causes, how the most important events of our lives originated in the most trifling circumstances; how the beginning of our greatest happiness or greatest misery is to be attributed to a delay, to an accident, to a mistake; we learn a lesson of profound humility. This is the irony of life.

The irony of a little child and its questions, at times how bitter!

Eccentric people are never loved for their eccentricities.

What is called firmness, is often nothing more than confirmed self-love.

Many know how to please, but know not when they have ceased to give pleasure. The same in arguing: they never lead people to a conclusion and permit them to draw it for themselves; being unaware that most persons, if they had but placed one brick in a building, are interested in the progress, and boast of the success of a work in which they have been *so materially engaged.*

There is an honesty which is but decided selfishness in disguise. The man who will not refrain from expressing his sentiments and manifesting his feelings, however unfit the time, however inappropriate the place, however painful to others this expression may be, lays claim forsooth to our approbation as an honest man, and sneers at those of finer sensibility as hypocrites.

Do not mistake energy for enthusiasm; the softest speakers are often the most enthusiastic of men.

The best commentary upon any work of literature is a faithful life of the author. And one reason, among many, why it must always be so advantageous to read the works of the illustrious dead is that their lives are more fairly written, and their characters better understood.

It may appear to an unthinking person that the life, perhaps an obtrusive one, of the man who has devoted himself to abstract and speculative subjects can be of no very considerable importance. But it is far otherwise. For instance, if Locke had never been engaged in the affairs of this world, would his biography have been of no importance if it had only informed us that for many years he devoted himself to the study of medicine? Are there no passages in his "Essay concerning Human Understanding," which such a fact tends to elucidate? Or is it not, in reality, the clew to a right understanding of all his metaphysical writings?

How often does a single anecdote reveal the real motive

which prompted an author to write a particular work, and the influence of which is visible in every page! "When I returned from Spain by Paris (says Lord Clarendon), Mr. Hobbes frequently came to me and told me his book—which he would call 'Leviathan'—was then printing in England, and that he received every week a sheet to correct, of which he showed me one or two sheets, and thought it would be finished within little more than a month; and showed me the epistle to Mr. Godolphin, which he meant to set before it, and read it to me, and concluded that he knew, when I read his book, I would not like it, and thereupon mentioned some of his conclusions. Upon which I asked him why he would publish such doctrine; to which, after a discourse between jest and earnest upon the subject, he said, '*The truth is, I have a mind to go home.*'" Perhaps this anecdote may explain many hard sayings in the "Leviathan."

It is worthy of remark that "The Prince" is now supposed to have been written solely from a wish to please the ruling powers, as appears in a private letter from Macchiavelli to his friend the Florentine ambassador at the Papal court, which was discovered at Rome, and first published to the world in 1810, by Ridolfi. In this letter Macchiavelli says that his work ought to be agreeable to a prince, and especially to a prince lately raised to power; and that he himself cannot continue to live as he was then living, without becoming contemptible through poverty. And also, in his dedication to Lorenzo de' Medici, after having said that subjects understand the disposition of princes best, as it is necessary to descend into the plains to consider the nature of the mountains, he thus concludes—"And if your Magnificence from the very point of your highness will sometimes cast your eyes upon those inferior places, you will see how undeservedly I undergo an extreme and continual despite of fortune."

After this we are not so much astonished at finding the following gentle admonition: "Let a prince therefore take the surest courses he can to maintain his life and state; the means will always be thought honorable, and be commended by every one."

Some of our law maxims are admirable rules of conduct. If, in spite of the censorious calumny of the world, we considered "a man innocent until he were proved guilty," or if,

in our daily thoughts, words, and actions, we did but "give the prisoner the benefit of the doubt," what much better Christians we should become.

It is an error to suppose that no man understands his own character. Most persons know even their failings very well, only they persist in giving them names different from those usually assigned by the rest of the world; and they compensate for this mistake by naming, at first sight, with singular accuracy, these very same failings in others.

Men love to contradict their general character. Thus a man is of a gloomy and suspicious temperament, is deemed by all morose, and erelong finds out the general opinion. He then suddenly deviates into some occasional acts of courtesy. Why? Not because he ought, not because his nature is changed; but because he dislikes being thoroughly understood. He will not be the *thing* whose behavior on any occasion the most careless prophet can with certainty foretell.

When we see the rapid motions of insects at evening, we exclaim, how happy they must be! — so inseparably are activity and happiness connected in our minds.

The most enthusiastic man in a cause is rarely chosen as the leader.

We have some respect for one who, if he tramples on the feelings of others, tramples on his own with equal apparent indifference.

It is frequently more safe to ridicule a man personally than to decry the order to which he belongs. Every man has made up his mind about his own merits; but, like the unconvinced believers in religion, he will not listen with patience to any doubts upon a subject which he himself would be most unwilling to investigate.

The opinion which a person gives of any book is frequently not so much a test of his intellect or his taste, as it is of the extent of his reading. An indifferent work may be joyfully welcomed by one who has neither had time nor opportunity to form a literary taste. It is from comparisons between different parts of the same book that you must discover the depth and judgment of an uncultivated mind.

"It is my opinion," says Herodotus, "that the Nile over-

flows in the summer season, because in the winter the sun, driven by the storms from his usual course, ascends into the higher regions of the air above Libya." Many a man will smile at the delightful simplicity of the historian, and still persevere in dogmatizing about subjects upon which he does not even possess information enough to support him in hazarding a conjecture.

It is not in the solar spectrum only that the least warmth is combined with the deepest color.

How often we should stop in the pursuit of folly, if it were not for the difficulties that continually beckon us onwards.

Simple Ignorance has in its time been complimented by the names of most of the vices, and of all the virtues.

No man ever praised two persons *equally*—and pleased them both.

A keen observer of mankind has said that "to aspire is to be alone": he might have extended his aphorism—to think deeply upon any subject is indeed to be alone.

In the world of mind, as in that of matter, we always occupy a position. He who is continually changing his point of view will see more, and that too more clearly, than one who, statue-like, forever stands upon the same pedestal, however lofty and well placed that pedestal may be.

Some people are too foolish to commit follies.

The knowledge of others which experience gives us is of slight value when compared with that which we obtain from having proved the inconstancy of our own desires.

The world will tolerate many vices, but not their diminutives.

It is a weak thing to tell half your story, and then ask your friend's advice—a still weaker thing to take it.

How to gain the advantages of society, without at the same time losing ourselves, is a question of no slight difficulty. The wise man often follows the crowd at a little distance, in order that he may not come suddenly upon it, nor become entangled with it, and that he may with some means of amusement maintain a clear and quiet pathway.

Not a few are willing to shelter their folly behind the respectability of downright vice.

We are frequently understood the least by those who have known us the longest.

The reasons which any man offers to you for his own conduct betray his opinion of your character.

If you are very often deceived by those around you, you may be sure that you deserve to be deceived; and that instead of railing at the general falseness of mankind, you have first to pronounce judgment on your own jealous tyranny, or on your own weak credulity. Those only who can bear the truth will hear it.

The wisest maxims are not those which fortify us against the deceit of others.

Very subtle-minded persons often complain that their friends fall from them, and these complaints are not altogether unjust. One reason of this is that they display so much dialectic astuteness on every occasion, that their friends feel certain that such men, however unjustifiably they may behave, will always be able to justify themselves to themselves. Now we mortals are strangely averse to loving those who are never in the wrong, and much more those who are always ready to prove themselves in the right.

You cannot insure the gratitude of others for a favor conferred upon them in the way which is most agreeable to yourself.

How singularly mournful it is to observe in the conversation or writings of a very superior man and original thinker, homely, if not commonplace, expressions about the vanity of human wishes, the mutability of this world, the weariness of life. It seems as if he felt that his own bitter experience had taken away the triteness from that which is nevertheless so trite; as if he thought it were needless to seek fine phrases, and as idle a mockery as it would be to gild an instrument of torture.

It must be a very weary day to the youth, when he first discovers that after all he will only become a man.

It is unwise for a great man to reason as if others were like

him: it is much more unwise to treat them as if they were very different.

Men are ruined by the exceptions to their general rules of action. This may seem a mockery, but it is nevertheless a fact to be observed in the records of history, as well as in the trivial occurrences of daily life. One who is habitually dark and deceptive commits a single act of confidence, and his subtle schemes are destroyed forever. His first act of extravagance ruins the cautious man. The coward is brave for a moment, and dies; the hero wavers for the first — and the last time.

Some persons are insensible to flattering words; but who can resist the flattery of modest imitation?

An inferior demon is not a great man, as some writers would fain persuade us.

The world would be in a more wretched state than it is at present, if riches and honors were distributed according to merit alone. It is the complaint of the wisest of men, that he "returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." But if it were otherwise, if bread were indeed the portion of the wise, then the hungry would have something to lament over more severe even than the pangs of hunger. The belief that merit is generally neglected forms the secret consolation of almost every human being, from the mightiest prince to the meanest peasant. Divines have contended that the world would cease to be a place of trial if a system of impartial distribution according to merit were adopted. This is true, for it would then be a place of punishment.

There is no power in the wisdom of the insincere.

Conviction never abides without a welcome from the heart.

It is necessary to be decisive; not because deliberate counsel would never improve your designs, but because the foolish and the unthinking will certainly act if there be but a moment's pause.

The practical man — an especial favorite in this age — often takes the field with his single fact against a great principle, in

the reckless spirit of one who would not hesitate to sever the thread on which he is unable to string his own individual pearl —perhaps a false one—even though he should scatter many jewels worthy of a prince's diadem.

Even the meanest are mighty to do evil.

If there is any one quality of the mind in which the really great have conspired, as it were, to surpass other men, it is moral courage. He who possesses this quality may sometimes be made a useful tool or a ready sacrifice in the hands of crafty statesmen; but let him be the chief, and not the subordinate, give him the field, grant him the opportunity, and his name will not deserve to be unwritten in the records of his country. When such a man perceives that if he fail, every one will be able to understand the risk that has been incurred; but that if he succeed, no one will estimate the danger that has silently been overcome; he bows, nevertheless, to the supreme dictates of his own judgment, regardless alike of the honors of his own age, and the praises of posterity.

It requires some moral courage to disobey, and yet there have been occasions when obedience would have been defeat.

But it is not only in the council, in the senate, in the field, that its merits are so preeminent. In private life, what daily deceit would be avoided, what evils would be remedied, if men did but possess more moral courage!—not that false image of it which proceeds from a blind and inconsiderate rashness, from an absence both of forethought and imagination; but that calm reliance on the decisions of reason, that carelessness of the undeserved applause of our neighbor, which will induce the great man to act according to his own informed judgment, and not according to the opinions of those who will not know, and who could never appreciate his motives.

Feeble applause may arise from a keen and fastidious sense of the slightest imperfection; but it is more frequently to be attributed to an inadequate notion of the dangers which have been avoided, and the difficulties which have been overcome.

The trifling of a great man is never trivial.

When two disputants relinquish a discussion, each apparently more convinced by his adversary's arguments of the goodness of his own cause, we imagine that debates of this

kind can produce no beneficial effect. We are mistaken: after a well-fought battle both parties send their herald to claim a victory, but under cover of night the vanquished will find out their defeat and retire in silence to their ships.

It is difficult to discover the estimation in which one man holds another's powers of mind by seeing them together. The soundest intellect and the keenest wit will sometimes shrink at the vivacity, and pay an apparent deference to the energy, of mere cleverness; as Faust, when overcome by loud sophistry, exclaims, "He who is determined to be right, and has but a tongue, will be right undoubtedly."

You wonder that your friend listens with such patience to your catalogue of his peculiar faults and vices; while he thinks that you are but enumerating those distinctions which separate him from the multitude, and is somewhat flattered at finding himself an object of your continual attention.

He who, after considering the merits of a system, turns instantly to the attack upon it, does not always pursue the most judicious mode for the discovery of truth or the detection of error; and moreover, he does not allow his own mind sufficient influence. Perhaps the mind from its manifold stores would have added strength to the system. Perhaps it would have detected the fallacy without having recourse to the arguments advanced against it by others. The most fatal bigotry may certainly be produced by reading only one side of a question, but at the same time it is not altogether wise to treat the intellect as a mere court of justice, and always to bring the accuser and the accused immediately to confront one another. It is not to be forgotten that two waves of light may interfere in such a manner as to produce total darkness.

Wretched indeed is the mental state of that man who, by a strange fatality, is doomed to perceive the reflection of his own weak and inconclusive nature in all the works of others; and seeing that, and that only, scatters his censure with lavish profusion, in the vain hope that he is manifesting his own intellectual superiority.

You may be forgiven for an injury which, when made known to the world, will render you alone the object of its ridicule.

When a subtle distinction is drawn between two characters, those who can discern its nature, in their delight at an intellectual triumph, will often neglect to perceive the injustice of its application.

There are many who do not perceive that in the endeavor to remove those ornaments which in their opinion conceal and finally subdue the best qualities of the heart, they are destroying the strongest aids to virtue. Romance, refinement, sensibility, are terms which of themselves will always provoke the idle laughter of the selfish, the coarse, and the hard-hearted. But it is vexatious to behold the real friends of virtue priding themselves on their strength of mind, and joining with the worldly and the hard-hearted to decry that which often immediately proceeds from principles which they themselves would desire to see established, and acting upon which they have undertaken so perilous an enterprise with such unworthy allies. I know it may be said that it is against the excess that their ridicule is directed. But let them feel certain that an intercourse with the world will destroy all that they would wish to be destroyed—and, alas! much more; and that they will never have cause to reproach their consciences with any omission in this matter.

It were certainly charitable, and perhaps just, to suppose that it is in their haste to regain the paths of innocence, that the guilty so often add stupidity to guilt.

If there is any one thing in which wisdom is preëminently conspicuous, it is in the wonderful ease with which its possessor is enabled to set apart the materials from which a correct opinion may be formed. The fool perceives one circumstance, and cannot withhold his facile judgment. The man who suffers under prudence without wisdom, collects a vast body of disorderly facts which only serve to perplex his wearied understanding. That power of giving the best advice on sudden emergencies, and of conjecturing with felicity about future events, which the historian ascribes to Themistocles, and which might have been ascribed to Cæsar, and perhaps to Bonaparte, is mainly to be attributed to their avoiding these opposite errors of foolish prudence and imprudent folly.

Few will at first be pleased with those thoughts which are

entirely new to them, and which, if true, they feel to be truths which they should never have discovered for themselves.

Perhaps if the power of becoming beautiful were granted to the ugliest of mankind, he would only wish to be so changed that, when changed, he might be considered a very handsome likeness of his former self.



BEHIND THE VEIL.[1]

(From "In Memoriam," by Alfred Tennyson)

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shriveled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last — far off — at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?
An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry.

The wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life;

[1] By permission of the Publishers, Macmillan & Co, Ltd.

That I, considering everywhere
  Her secret meaning in her deeds,
  And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
  And falling with my weight of cares
  Upon the great world's altar stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
  And gather dust and chaff, and call
  To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

"So careful of the type?" but no.
  From scarped cliff and quarried stone
  She cries, "A thousand types are gone:
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me.
  I bring to life, I bring to death:
  The spirit does but mean the breath:
I know no more." And he, shall he,

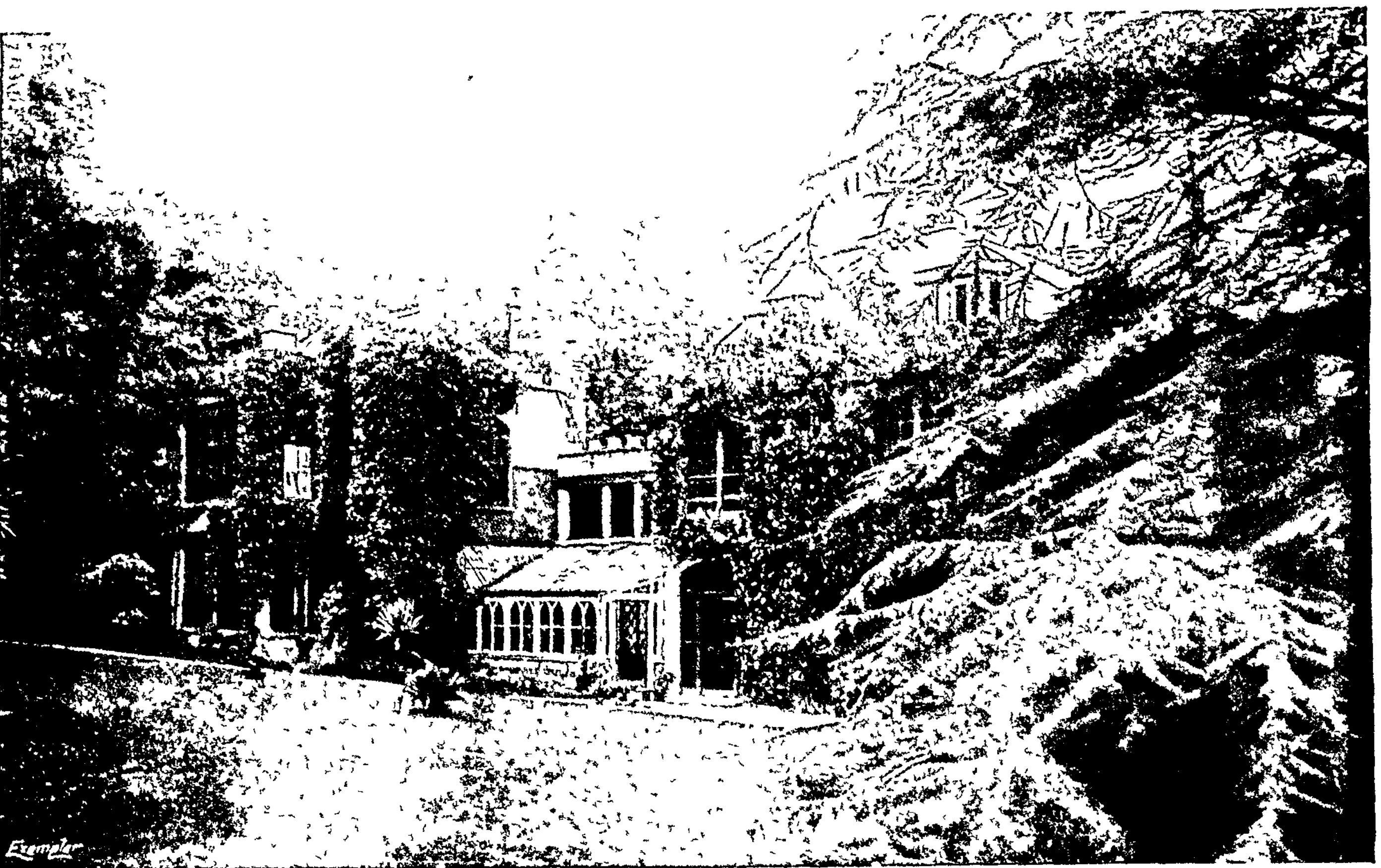
Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,
  Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
  Who rolled the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
  And love Creation's final law—
  Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravin, shrieked against his creed—

Who loved, who suffered countless ills,
  Who battled for the True, the Just,
  Be blown about the desert dust,
Or sealed within the iron hills?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
  A discord. Dragons of the prime,
  That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music matched with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!
  O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
  What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.



THE HOME OF TENNYSON, FARRINGFORD, ISLE OF WIGHT

SCENES FROM "COUSIN PONS."[1]

BY HONORÉ DE BALZAC

[HONORE DE BALZAC, the greatest of French novelists, was born at Tours in 99, educated at the Collège de Vendôme, and studied law; then retired to a ris garret to write novels in the most miserable poverty for years, before he in the least public attention. Ten years later he had become famous, though t prosperous. In 1848 he married a Polish lady whom he had long loved, and st as he was beginning to have an easy life he died, August 18, 1850. His vels are very numerous, most of them were grouped by him as a "Comédie imaine," which was to comprise all sides of life. Some of the best known are Eugénie Grandet," "César Birotteau," "Père Goriot," "Lost Illusions," The Woman of Thirty," "The Poor Relations," "The Last Chouan" (his st success), "La Peau de Chagrin," "The Search for the Absolute," and The Country Doctor."]

I. THE CONSPIRACY.

THERE was a pause. Pons was too weak to say more. La ibot took the opportunity and tapped her head significantly. Do not contradict him," she said to Schmucke; "it would ill him."

Pons gazed into Schmucke's honest face. "And she says hat you sent her ——" he continued.

"Yes," Schmucke affirmed heroically. "It had to pe. Hush! -let us safe your life. It is absurd to vork and train your drength gif you haf a dreasure. Get better; ve vill sell some ric-à-prac und end our tays kvietly in a corner someveres, mit and Montame Zipod."

"She has perverted you," moaned Pons.

Mme. Cibot had taken up her station behind the bed to nake signals unobserved. Pons thought that she had left the oom. "She is murdering me," he added.

"What is that? I am murdering you, am I?" cried La Cibot, suddenly appearing, hand on hips and eyes aflame. "I am is faithful as a dog, and this is all I get! God Almighty!——"

She burst into tears and dropped down into the great chair, a tragical movement which wrought a most disastrous revulsion in Pons.

"Very good," she said, rising to her feet. The woman's malignant eyes looked poison and bullets at the two friends. "Very good. Nothing that I can do is right here, and I am tired of slaving my life out. You shall take a nurse."

[1] By permission of J. M Dent & Co

Pons and Schmucke exchanged glances in dismay.

"Oh! you may look at each other like actors. I mean it. I shall ask Dr. Poulain to find a nurse for you. And now we will settle accounts. You shall pay me back the money that I have spent on you, and that I would never have asked you for, I that have gone to M. Pillerault to borrow another five hundred francs of him ——"

"It ees his illness!" cried Schmucke—he sprang to Mme. Cibot and put an arm round her waist—"haf batience."

"As for you, you are an angel, I could kiss the ground you tread upon," said she. "But M. Pons never liked me, he always hated me. Besides, he thinks perhaps that I want to be mentioned in his will ——"

"Hush! you vill kill him!" cried Schmucke.

"Good-by, sir," said La Cibot, with a withering look at Pons. "You may keep well for all the harm I wish you. When you can speak to me pleasantly, when you can believe that what I do is done for the best, I will come back again. Till then I shall stay in my own room. You were like my own child to me; did anybody ever see a child revolt against its mother? . . . No, no, M. Schmucke, I do not want to hear more. I will bring you *your* dinner and wait upon *you*, but you must take a nurse. Ask M. Poulain about it."

And out she went, slamming the door after her so violently that the precious, fragile objects in the room trembled. To Pons in his torture, the rattle of china was like the final blow dealt by the executioner to a victim broken on the wheel.

An hour later La Cibot called to Schmucke through the door, telling him that his dinner was waiting for him in the dining room. She would not cross the threshold. Poor Schmucke went out to her with a haggard, tear-stained face.

"Mein boor Bons is vandering," said he; "he says dat you are ein pad voman. It ees his illness," he added hastily, to soften La Cibot and excuse his friend.

"Oh, I have had enough of his illness! Look here, he is neither father, nor husband, nor brother, nor child of mine. He has taken a dislike to me; well and good, that is enough! As for you, you see, I would follow *you* to the end of the world; but when a woman gives her life, her heart, and all her savings, and neglects her husband (for here has Cibot fallen ill), and then hears that she is a bad woman—it is coming it rather too strong, it is."

"Too sthrong?"

"Too strong, yes. Never mind idle words. Let us come to the facts. As to that, you owe me for three months at a hundred and ninety francs — that is five hundred and seventy francs; then there is the rent that I have paid twice (here are the receipts), six hundred more, including rates and the sou in the franc for the porter — something under twelve hundred francs altogether, and with the two thousand francs besides — without interest, mind you — the total amounts to three thousand one hundred and ninety-two francs. And remember that you will want at least two thousand francs before long for the doctor, and the nurse, and the medicine, and the nurse's board. That was why I borrowed a thousand francs of M. Pillerault," and with that she held up Gaudissart's bank note.

It may readily be conceived that Schmucke listened to this reckoning with amazement, for he knew about as much of business as a cat knows of music.

"Montame Zipod," he expostulated, "Bons haf lost his head. Bardon him, und nurse him as pefore, und pe our profidence; I peg it of you on mine knees," and he knelt before La Cibot and kissed the tormentor's hands.

La Cibot raised Schmucke and kissed him on the forehead. "Listen, my lamb," said she; "here is Cibot ill in bed; I have just sent for Dr. Poulain. So I ought to set my affairs in order. And what is more, Cibot saw me crying, and flew into such a passion that he will not have me set foot in here again. It is *he* who wants the money; it is his, you see. We women can do nothing when it comes to that. But if you let him have his money back again — the three thousand two hundred francs — he will be quiet, perhaps. Poor man, it is his all, earned by the sweat of his brow, the savings of twenty-six years of life together. He must have his money to-morrow; there is no getting round him. — You do not know Cibot; when he is angry he would kill a man. Well, I might perhaps get leave of him to look after you both as before. Be easy. I will just let him say anything that comes into his head. I will bear it all for love of you, an angel as you are."

"No, I am ein boor man, dot lof his friend und vould gif his life to save him —— "

"But the money?" broke in La Cibot. "My good M. Schmucke, let us suppose that you pay me nothing; you will want three thousand francs, and where are they to come from?

Upon my word, do you know what I should do in your place? I should not think twice, I should just sell seven or eight good-for-nothing pictures, and put up some of those instead that are standing in your closet with their faces to the wall for want of room. One picture or another, what difference does it make?"

"Und vy?"

"He is so cunning. It is his illness, for he is a lamb when he is well. He is capable of getting up and prying about; and if by any chance he went into the salon, he is so weak that he could not go beyond the door; he would see that they were all still there."

"Drue!"

"And when he is quite well, we will tell him about the sale. And if you wish to confess, throw it all upon me, say that you were obliged to pay me. Come! I have a broad back ——"

"I cannot tispose of dings dot are not mine," the good German answered simply.

"Very well. I will summons you, you and M. Pons."

"It vould kill him ——"

"Take your choice! Dear me, sell the pictures and tell him about it afterwards . . . you can show him the summons ——"

"Ver' goot. Summons us. Dot shall pe mine egscuse. I shall show him der chudgment."

Mme. Cibot went down to the court, and that very day at seven o'clock she called to Schmucke. Schmucke found himself confronted with M. Tabareau the bailiff, who called upon him to pay. Schmucke made answer, trembling from head to foot, and was forthwith summoned, together with Pons, to appear in the county court to hear judgment against him. The sight of the bailiff and a bit of stamped paper covered with scrawls produced such an effect upon Schmucke, that he held out no longer.

"Sell die bictures," he said with the tears in his eyes.

Next morning, at six o'clock, Élie Magus and Rémonencq took down the paintings of their choice. Two receipts for two thousand five hundred francs were made out in correct form: —

"I, the undersigned, representing M. Pons, acknowledge the receipt of two thousand five hundred francs from M. Élie

Magus for the four pictures sold to him, the said sum being appropriated to the use of M. Pons. The first picture, attributed to Durer, is a portrait of a woman; the second, likewise a portrait, is of the Italian School; the third, a Dutch landscape by Breughel; and the fourth, a 'Holy Family,' by an unknown master of the Florentine School."

Rémonencq's receipt was worded in precisely the same way; a Greuze, a Claude Lorraine, a Rubens, and a Van Dyck being disguised as pictures of the French and Flemish schools.

"Der monny makes me beleef dot the chimcracks haf som value," said Schmucke, when the five thousand francs were paid over.

"They are worth something," said Rémonencq. "I would willingly give a hundred thousand francs for the lot."

Rémonencq, asked to do a trifling service, hung eight pictures of the proper size in the same frames, taking them from among the less valuable pictures in Schmucke's bedroom.

No sooner was Élie Magus in possession of the four great pictures than he went, taking La Cibot with him, under pretense of settling accounts. But he pleaded poverty, he found fault with the pictures, they needed rebacking, he offered La Cibot thirty thousand francs by way of commission, and finally dazzled her with the sheets of paper on which the Bank of France engraves the words "One thousand francs," in capital letters. Magus thereupon condemned Rémonencq to pay the like sum to La Cibot, by lending him the money on the security of his four pictures, which he took with him as a guarantee. So glorious were they, that Magus could not bring himself to part with them, and next day he bought them of Rémonencq for six thousand francs over and above the original price, and an invoice was duly made out for the four. Mme. Cibot, the richer by sixty-eight thousand francs, once more swore her two accomplices to absolute secrecy. Then she asked the Jew's advice. She wanted to invest the money in such a way that no one should know of it.

"Buy shares in the Orléans Railway," said he; "they are thirty francs below par, you will double your capital in three years. They will give you scraps of paper, which you keep safe in a portfolio"

"Stay here, M. Magus. I will go and fetch the man of business who acts for M. Pons' family. He wants to know

how much you will give for the whole bag of tricks upstairs. I will go for him now."

"If only she were a widow!" said Rémonenecq when she was gone. "She would just suit me; she will have plenty of money now——"

"Especially if she puts her money into the Orléans Railway; she will double her capital in two years' time. I have put all my poor little savings into it," added the Jew, "for my daughter's portion. — Come, let us take a turn on the boulevard until this lawyer arrives."

"Cibot is very bad as it is," continued Rémonencq; "if it should please God to take him to Himself, I should have a famous wife to keep a shop; I could set up on a large scale——"

"Good day, M. Fraisier," La Cibot began in an ingratiating tone, as she entered her legal adviser's office. "Why, what is this that your porter has been telling me? are you going to move?"

"Yes, my dear Mme. Cibot. I am taking the first floor above Dr. Poulain, and trying to borrow two or three thousand francs so as to furnish the place properly; it is very nice, upon my word, the landlord has just papered and painted it. I am acting, as I told you, in Président de Marville's interests and yours. . . . I am not a solicitor now; I mean to have my name entered on the roll of barristers, and I must be well lodged. A barrister in Paris cannot have his name on the rolls unless he has decent furniture and books and the like. I am a doctor of law, I have kept my terms, and have powerful interest already. . . . Well, how are we getting on?"

"Perhaps you would accept my savings," said La Cibot. "I have put them in the savings bank. I have not much, only three thousand francs, the fruits of twenty-five years of stinting and scraping. You might give me a bill of exchange, as Rémonencq says; for I am ignorant myself, I only know what they tell me."

"No. It is against the rules of the guild for a barrister (*avocat*) to put his name to a bill. I will give you a receipt, bearing interest at five per cent per annum, on the understanding that if I make an income of twelve hundred francs for you out of old Pons' estate you will cancel it."

La Cibot, caught in the trap, uttered not a word.

"Silence gives consent," Fraisier continued. "Let me have it to-morrow morning."

"Oh! I am quite willing to pay fees in advance," said La Cibot; "it is one way of making sure of my money."

Fraisier nodded. "How are we getting on?" he repeated. "I saw Poulain yesterday; you are hurrying your invalid along, it seems. . . . One more scene such as yesterday's, and gallstones will form. Be gentle with him, my dear Mme. Cibot, do not lay up remorse for yourself. Life is not too long."

"Just let me alone with your remorse! Are you going to talk about the guillotine again? M. Pons is a contrairy old thing. You don't know him? It is he that bothers me. There is not a more crossgrained man alive; his relations are in the right of it, he is sly, revengeful, and contrairy. . . . M. Magus has come, as I told you, and is waiting to see you."

"Right! I will be there as soon as you. Your income depends upon the price the collection will fetch. If it brings in eight hundred thousand francs, you shall have fifteen hundred francs a year. It is a fortune."

"Very well. I will tell them to value the things on their consciences."

An hour later, Pons was fast asleep. The doctor had ordered a soothing draught, which Schmucke administered, all unconscious that La Cibot had doubled the dose. Fraisier, Rémonencq, and Magus, three gallows birds, were examining the seventeen hundred different objects which formed the old musician's collection, one by one.

Schmucke had gone to bed. The three kites, drawn by the scent of a corpse, were masters of the field.

"Make no noise," said La Cibot whenever Magus went into ecstasies or explained the value of some work of art to Rémonencq. The dying man slept on in the neighboring room, while greed in four different forms appraised the treasures that he must leave behind, and waited impatiently for him to die — a sight to wring the heart.

Three hours went by before they had finished the salon.

"On an average," said the grimy old Jew, "everything here is worth a thousand francs."

"Seventeen hundred thousand francs!" exclaimed Fraisier, in bewilderment.

"Not to me," Magus answered promptly, and his eyes grew dull. "I would not give more than a hundred thousand francs myself for the collection. You cannot tell how long you may keep a thing on hand. . . . There are masterpieces that wait ten years for a buyer, and meanwhile the purchase money is doubled by compound interest. Still, I should pay cash."

"There is stained glass in the other room, as well as enamels and miniatures and gold and silver snuffboxes," put in Rémonencq.

"Can they be seen?" inquired Fraisier.

"I'll see if he is sound asleep," replied La Cibot. She made a sign, and the three birds of prey came in.

"There are masterpieces yonder!" said Magus, indicating the salon, every bristle of his white beard twitching as he spoke. "But the riches are here! And what riches! Kings have nothing more glorious in royal treasuries."

Rémonencq's eyes lighted up till they glowed like carbuncles at the sight of the gold snuffboxes. Fraisier, cool and calm as a serpent, or some snake creature with the power of rising erect, stood with his viper's head stretched out, in such an attitude as a painter would choose for Mephistopheles. The three covetous beings, thirsting for gold as devils thirst for the dew of heaven, looked simultaneously, as it chanced, at the owner of all this wealth. Some nightmare troubled Pons; he stirred, and suddenly, under the influence of those diabolical glances, he opened his eyes with a shrill cry.

"Thieves! . . . There they are! . . . Help! Murder! Help!"

The nightmare was evidently still upon him, for he sat up in bed, staring before him with blank, wide-open eyes, and had not power to move.

Élie Magus and Rémonencq made for the door, but a word glued them to the spot.

"*Magus* here! . . . I am betrayed!"

Instinctively the sick man had known that his beloved pictures were in danger, a thought that touched him at least as closely as any dread for himself, and he awoke. Fraisier meanwhile did not stir.

"Mme. Cibot! who is that gentleman?" cried Pons, shivering at the sight.

"Goodness me! how could I put him out of the door?"

she inquired, with a wink and gesture for Fraisier's benefit. "This gentleman came just a minute ago, from your family."

Fraisier could not conceal his admiration for La Cibot.

"Yes, sir," he said, "I have come on behalf of Mme. la Présidente de Marville, her husband, and her daughter, to express their regret. They learned quite by accident that you are ill, and they would like to nurse you themselves. They want you to go to Marville and get well there. Mme. la Vicomtesse Popinot, the little Cécile that you love so much, will be your nurse. She took your part with her mother. She convinced Mme. de Marville that she had made a mistake."

"So my next of kin have sent you to me, have they?" Pons exclaimed indignantly, "and sent the best judge and expert in all Paris with you to show you the way? Oh! a nice commission!" he cried, bursting into wild laughter. "You have come to value my pictures and curiosities, my snuffboxes and miniatures! . . . Make your valuation. You have a man there who understands everything, and more — he can buy everything, for he is a millionaire ten times over. . . . My dear relatives will not have long to wait," he added with bitter irony, "they have choked the last breath out of me. . . . Ah! Mme. Cibot, you said you were a mother to me, and you bring dealers into the house, and my competitor and the Camusots, while I am asleep! . . . Get out, all of you! ——"

The unhappy man was beside himself with anger and fear; he rose from the bed and stood upright, a gaunt, wasted figure.

"Take my arm, sir," said La Cibot, rushing to the rescue, lest Pons should fall. "Pray calm yourself, the gentlemen are gone."

"I want to see the salon . . ." said the death-stricken man. La Cibot made a sign to the three ravens to take flight. Then she caught up Pons as if he had been a feather, and put him in bed again, in spite of his cries. When she saw that he was quite helpless and exhausted, she went to shut the door on the staircase. The three who had done Pons to death were still on the landing; La Cibot told them to wait. She heard Fraisier say to Magus: —

"Let me have it in writing, and sign it, both of you. Undertake to pay nine hundred thousand francs in cash for M. Pons' collection, and we will see about putting you in the way of making a handsome profit."

With that he said something to La Cibot in a voice so low

that the others could not catch it, and went down after the two dealers to the porter's room.

"Have they gone, Mme. Cibot?" asked the unhappy Pons, when she came back again.

"Gone? . . . who?" asked she.

"Those men."

"What men? There, now! you have seen men," said she. "You have just had a raving fit; if it hadn't been for me you would have gone out of the window, and now you are still talking of men in the room. . . . Is it always to be like this?"

"What! was there not a gentleman here just now, saying that my relatives had sent him?"

"Will you still stand me out?" said she. "Upon my word, do you know where you ought to be sent?—To the asylum at Charenton. You see men——"

"Élie Magus, Rémonencq, and——"

"Oh! as for Rémonencq, you may have seen *him*, for he came up to tell me that my poor Cibot is so bad that I must clear out of this and come down. My Cibot comes first, you see. When my husband is ill, I can think of nobody else. Try to keep quiet and sleep for a couple of hours; I have sent for Dr. Poulain, and I will come up with him. . . . Take a drink and be good——"

"Then was there no one in the room just now, when I waked?"

"No one," said she. "You must have seen M. Rémonencq in one of your looking-glasses."

"You are right, Mme. Cibot," said Pons, meek as a lamb.

"Well, now you are sensible again. . . . Good-by, my cherub; keep quiet, I shall be back again in a minute."

When Pons heard the outer door close upon her, he summoned up all his remaining strength to rise.

"They are cheating me," he muttered to himself, "they are robbing me! Schmucke is a child that would let them tie him up in a sack."

The terrible scene had seemed so real, it could not be a dream, he thought; a desire to throw light upon the puzzle excited him; he managed to reach the door, opened it after many efforts, and stood on the threshold of his salon. There they were—his dear pictures, his statues, his Florentine bronzes, his porcelain; the sight of them revived him. The old collector walked in his dressing gown along the narrow spaces between

the credence tables and the sideboards that lined the wall; his feet bare, his head on fire. His first glance of ownership told him that everything was there; he turned to go back to bed again, when he noticed that a Greuze portrait looked out of the frame that had held Sebastian del Piombo's "Templar." Suspicion flashed across his brain, making his dark thoughts apparent to him, as a flash of lightning marks the outlines of the cloud bars on a stormy sky. He looked round for the eight capital pictures of the collection; each one of them was replaced by another. A dark film suddenly overspread his eyes; his strength failed him; he fell fainting upon the polished floor.

So heavy was the swoon that for two hours he lay as he fell, till Schmucke awoke and went to see his friend, and found him lying unconscious in the salon. With endless pains Schmucke raised the half-dead body and laid it on the bed; but when he came to question the death-stricken man, and saw the look in the dull eyes and heard the vague, inarticulate words, the good German, so far from losing his head, rose to the very heroism of friendship. Man and child as he was, with the pressure of despair came the inspiration of a mother's tenderness, a woman's love. He warmed towels (he found towels!), he wrapped them about Pons' hands, he laid them over the pit of the stomach; he took the cold, moist forehead in his hands, he summoned back life with a might of will worthy of Apollonius of Tyana, laying kisses on his friend's eyelids like some Mary bending over the dead Christ, in a *pietà* carved in bas-relief by some great Italian sculptor. The divine effort, the outpouring of one life into another, the work of mother and of lover, was crowned with success. In half an hour the warmth revived Pons; he became himself again, the hues of life returned to his eyes, suspended faculties gradually resumed their play under the influence of artificial heat. Schmucke gave him balm water with a little wine in it; the spirit of life spread through the body; intelligence lighted up the forehead so short a while ago insensible as a stone; and Pons knew that he had been brought back to life, by what sacred devotion, what might of friendship!

"But for you, I should die," he said, and as he spoke he felt the good German's tears falling on his face. Schmucke was laughing and crying at once.

Poor Schmucke! he had waited for those words with a frenzy of hope as costly as the frenzy of despair; and now his

strength utterly failed him, he collapsed like a rent balloon. It was his turn to fall; he sank into the easy-chair, clasped his hands, and thanked God in fervent prayer. For him a miracle had just been wrought. He put no belief in the efficacy of the prayer of his deeds; the miracle had been wrought by God in direct answer to his cry. And yet that miracle was a natural effect, such as medical science often records.

A sick man, surrounded by those who love him, nursed by those who wish earnestly that he should live, will recover (other things being equal), when another patient tended by hirelings will die. Doctors decline to see unconscious magnetism in this phenomenon; for them it is the result of intelligent nursing, of exact obedience to their orders; but many a mother knows the virtue of such ardent projection of strong, unceasing prayer.

"My good Schmucke——"

"Say nodings; I shall hear you mit mein heart . . . rest, rest!" said Schmucke, smiling at him.

"Poor friend, noble creature, child of God living in God! . . . The one being that has loved me. . . ." The words came out with pauses between them; there was a new note, a something never heard before, in Pons' voice. All the soul, so soon to take flight, found utterance in the words that filled Schmucke with happiness almost like a lover's rapture.

"Yes, yes. I shall be shtrong as a lion. I shall vork for two!"

"Listen, my good, my faithful, adorable friend. Let me speak, I have not much time left. I am a dead man. I cannot recover from these repeated shocks."

Schmucke was crying like a child.

"Just listen," continued Pons, "and cry afterwards. As a Christian, you must submit. I have been robbed. It is La Cibot's doing. . . . I ought to open your eyes before I go; you know nothing of life. . . . Somebody has taken away eight of the pictures, and they were worth a great deal of money."

"Vorgif me—I sold dem."

"*You* sold them?"

"Yes, I," said poor Schmucke. "Dey summoned us to der court——"

"*Summoned?* . . . Who summoned us?"

"Wait," said Schmucke. He went for the bit of stamped paper left by the bailiff, and gave it to Pons. Pons read the

scrawl through with close attention, then he let the paper drop and lay quite silent for a while. A close observer of the work of men's hands, unheedful so far of the workings of the brain, Pons finally counted out the threads of the plot woven about him by La Cibot. The artist's fire, the intellect that won the Roman scholarship — all his youth, came back to him for a little.

"My good Schmucke," he said at last, "you must do as I tell you, and obey like a soldier. Listen! go downstairs into the lodge and tell that abominable woman that I should like to see the person sent to me by my cousin the President; and that unless he comes, I shall leave my collection to the Musée. Say that a will is in question."

Schmucke went on his errand; but at the first word, La Cibot answered by a smile.

"My good M. Schmucke, our dear invalid has had a delirious fit; he thought that there were men in the room. On my word as an honest woman, no one has come from the family."

Schmucke went back with this answer, which he repeated word for word.

"She is cleverer, more astute and cunning and wily, than I thought," said Pons, with a smile. "She lies even in her room. Imagine it! This morning she brought a Jew here, Élie Magus by name, and Rémonencq, and a third whom I do not know, more terrific than the other two put together. She meant to make a valuation while I was asleep; I happened to wake, and saw them all three, estimating the worth of my snuffboxes. The stranger said, indeed, that the Camusots had sent him here; I spoke to him. . . . That shameless woman stood me out that I was dreaming! . . . My good Schmucke, it was not a dream. I heard the man perfectly plainly; he spoke to me. . . . The two dealers took fright and made for the door. . . . I thought that La Cibot would contradict herself — the experiment failed. . . . I will lay another snare, and trap the wretched woman. . . . Poor Schmucke, you think that La Cibot is an angel; and for this month past she has been killing me by inches to gain her covetous ends. I would not believe that a woman who served us faithfully for years could be so wicked. That doubt has been my ruin. . . . How much did the eight pictures fetch?"

"Vife tausend vrancs."

"Good heavens! they were worth twenty times as much!"

cried Pons; "the gems of the collection! I have not time now to institute proceedings; and if I did, you would figure in court as the dupe of those rascals. . . . A lawsuit would be the death of you. You do not know what justice means — a court of justice is a sink of iniquity. . . . At the sight of such horrors, a soul like yours would give way. And besides, you will have enough. The pictures cost me forty thousand francs. I have had them for thirty-six years. . . . Oh, we have been robbed with surprising dexterity. I am on the brink of the grave, I care for nothing now but thee — for thee, the best soul under the sun. . . .

"I will not have you plundered; all that I have is yours. So you must trust nobody, Schmucke, you that have never suspected any one in your life. I know God watches over you, but He may forget for one moment, and you will be seized like a vessel among pirates. . . . La Cibot is a monster! She is killing me; and you think her an angel! You shall see what she is. Go and ask her to give you the name of a notary, and I will show you her with her hand in the bag."

Schmucke listened as if Pons proclaimed an apocalypse. Could so depraved a creature as La Cibot exist? If Pons was right, it seemed to imply that there was no God in the world. He went down again to Mme. Cibot.

"Mein boor vriend Bons feel so ill," he said, "dat he vish to make his vill. Go und pring ein nodary."

II. The Stolen Will.

At midnight poor Schmucke sat in his easy-chair, watching with a breaking heart that shrinking of the features that comes with death; Pons looked so worn out with the day's exertions, that death seemed very near.

Presently Pons spoke. "I have just enough strength, I think, to last till to-morrow night," he said philosophically. "To-morrow night the death agony will begin; poor Schmucke! As soon as the notary and your two friends are gone, go for our good Abbé Duplanty, the curate of Saint-François. Good man, he does not know that I am ill, and I wish to take the Holy Sacrament to-morrow at noon."

There was a long pause.

"God so willed it that life has not been as I dreamed," Pons resumed. "I should so have loved wife and children

and home. . . . To be loved by a very few in some corner — that was my whole ambition! Life is hard for every one; I have seen people who had all that I wanted so much and could not have, and yet they were not happy. . . . Then at the end of my life, God put untold comfort in my way, when He gave me such a friend. . . . And one thing I have not to reproach myself with — that I have not known your worth nor appreciated you, my good Schmucke. . . . I have loved you with my whole heart, with all the strength of love that is in me. . . . Do not cry, Schmucke; I shall say no more if you cry, and it is so sweet to me to talk of ourselves to you. . . . If I had listened to you, I should not be dying. I should have left the world and broken off my habits, and then I should not have been wounded to death. And now, I want to think of no one but you at the last——"

"You are missdaken——"

"Do not contradict me — listen, dear friend. . . . You are as guileless and simple as a six-year-old child that has never left its mother; one honors you for it — it seems to me that God Himself must watch over such as you. But men are so wicked, that I ought to warn you beforehand . . . and then you will lose your generous trust, your saintlike belief in others, the bloom of a purity of soul that only belongs to genius or to hearts like yours. . . . In a little while you will see Mme. Cibot, who left the door ajar and watched us closely while M. Trognon was here — in a little while you will see her come for the will, as she believes it to be. . . . I expect the worthless creature will do her business this morning when she thinks you are asleep. Now, mind what I say, and carry out my instructions to the letter. . . . Are you listening?" asked the dying man.

But Schmucke was overcome with grief, his heart was throbbing painfully, his head fell back on the chair, he seemed to have lost consciousness.

"Yes," he answered, "I can hear, but it is as if you vere doo huntert baces afay from me. . . . It seem to me dat I am going town into der grafe mit you," said Schmucke, crushed with pain.

He went over to the bed, took one of Pons' hands in both his own, and within himself put up a fervent prayer.

"What is that that you are mumbling in German?"

"I asked of Gott dat He vould take us poth togedders to

Himself!" Schmucke answered simply when he had finished his prayer.

Pons bent over — it was a great effort, for he was suffering intolerable pain; but he managed to reach Schmucke, and kissed him on the forehead, pouring out his soul, as it were, in benediction upon a nature that recalled the lamb that lies at the foot of the Throne of God.

"See here, listen, my good Schmucke, you must do as dying people tell you ——"

"I am lisdening."

"The little door in the recess in your bedroom opens into that closet."

"Yes, but it is blocked up mit bictures."

"Clear them away at once, without making too much noise."

"Yes."

"Clear a passage on both sides, so that you can pass from your room into mine. — Now, leave the door ajar. — When La Cibot comes to take your place (and she is capable of coming an hour earlier than usual), you can go away to bed as if nothing had happened, and look very tired. Try to look sleepy. As soon as she settles down into the armchair, go into the closet, draw aside the muslin curtains over the glass door, and watch her. . . . Do you understand?"

"I oondershtand; you belief dat die pad voman is going to purn der vill."

"I do not know what she will do; but I am sure of this — that you will not take her for an angel afterwards. — And now play for me; improvise and make me happy. It will divert your thoughts; your gloomy ideas will vanish, and for me the dark hours will be filled with your dreams. . . ."

Schmucke sat down to the piano. Here he was in his element; and in a few moments, musical inspiration, quickened by the pain with which he was quivering and the consequent irritation that followed, came upon the kindly German, and, after his wont, he was caught up and borne above the world. On one sublime theme after another he executed variations, putting into them sometimes Chopin's sorrow, Chopin's Rafael-like perfection; sometimes the stormy Dante's grandeur of Liszt — the two musicians who most nearly approach Paganini's temperament. When execution reaches this supreme degree, the executant stands beside the poet, as it were; he is to the composer as the actor is to the writer of plays, a

divinely inspired interpreter of things divine. But that night, when Schmucke gave Pons an earnest of diviner symphonies, of that heavenly music for which Saint Cecilia let fall her instruments, he was at once Beethoven and Paganini, creator and interpreter. It was an outpouring of music inexhaustible as the nightingale's song — varied and full of delicate undergrowth as the forest flooded with her trills; sublime as the sky overhead. Schmucke played as he had never played before, and the soul of the old musician listening to him rose to ecstasy such as Rafael once painted in a picture which you may see at Bologna.

A terrific ringing of the doorbell put an end to these visions. The first-floor lodgers sent up the servant with a message. Would Schmucke please to stop the racket overhead. Madame, Monsieur, and Mademoiselle Chapoulot had been wakened, and could not sleep for the noise; they called his attention to the fact that the day was quite long enough for rehearsals of theatrical music, and added that people ought not to "strum" all night in a house in the Marais. — It was then three o'clock in the morning. At half-past three, La Cibot appeared, just as Pons had predicted. He might have actually heard the conference between Fraisier and the portress: "Did I not guess exactly how it would be?" his eyes seemed to say as he glanced at Schmucke, and, turning a little, he seemed to be fast asleep.

Schmucke's guileless simplicity was an article of belief with La Cibot (and be it noted that this faith in simplicity is the great source and secret of the success of all infantile strategy); La Cibot, therefore, could not suspect Schmucke of deceit when he came to say to her, with a face half of distress, half of glad relief: —

"I haf had a derrible night! a derrible dime of it! I vas opliged to blay to keep him kviet, and the virst-floor lodgers vas komm up to tell *me* to be kviet! . . . It was frightful, for der life of mein friend vas at shtake. I am so tired mit der blaying all night, dat dis morning I am all knocked up."

"My poor Cibot is very bad, too; one more day like yesterday, and he will have no strength left. . . . One can't help it; it is God's will."

"You haf a heart so honest, a soul so peautiful, dot gif der Zipod die, ve shall lif togedder," said the cunning Schmucke.

The craft of simple, straightforward folk is formidable

indeed; they are exactly like children, setting their unsuspected snares with the perfect craft of the savage.

"Oh, well, go and sleep, sonny!" returned La Cibot. "Your eyes look tired, they are as big as my fist. But there! if anything could comfort me for losing Cibot, it would be the thought of ending my days with a good man like you. Be easy. I will give Mme. Chapoulot a dressing down. . . . To think of a retired haberdasher's wife giving herself such airs!"

Schmucke went to his room and took up his post in the closet.

La Cibot had left the door ajar on the landing, Fraisier came in and closed it noiselessly as soon as he heard Schmucke shut his bedroom door. He had brought with him a lighted taper and a bit of very fine wire to open the seal of the will La Cibot, meanwhile, looking under the pillow, found the handkerchief with the key of the bureau knotted to one corner, and this so much the more easily because Pons purposely left the end hanging out over the bolster, and lay with his face to the wall.

La Cibot went straight to the bureau, opened it cautiously so as to make as little noise as possible, found the spring of the secret drawer, and hurried into the salon with the will in her hand. Her flight roused Pons' curiosity to the highest pitch, and as for Schmucke, he trembled as if he were the guilty person.

"Go back," said Fraisier, when she handed over the will. "He may wake, and he must find you there."

Fraisier opened the seal with a dexterity which proved that his was no 'prentice hand, and read the following curious document, headed "My Will," with ever-deepening astonishment:—

"On this fifteenth day of April, eighteen hundred and forty-five, I, being in my sound mind (as this my Will, drawn up in concert with M. Trognon, will testify), and feeling that I must shortly die of the malady from which I have suffered since the beginning of February last, am anxious to dispose of my property, and have herein recorded my last wishes:—

"I have always been impressed by the untoward circumstances that injure great pictures, and not unfrequently bring about total destruction. I have felt sorry for the beautiful

paintings condemned to travel from land to land, never finding some fixed abode whither admirers of great masterpieces may travel to see them. And I have always thought that the truly deathless work of a great master ought to be national property, put where every one of every nation may see it, even as the Light, God's masterpiece, shines for all His children.

"And as I have spent my life in collecting together and choosing a few pictures, some of the greatest masters' most glorious work, and as these pictures are as the master left them, — genuine examples, neither repainted nor retouched, — it has been a painful thought to me that the paintings which have been the joy of my life may be sold by public auction, and go, some to England, some to Russia, till they are all scattered abroad again as if they had never been gathered together. From this wretched fate I have determined to save both them and the frames in which they are set, all of them the work of skilled craftsmen.

"On these grounds, therefore, I give and bequeath the pictures which compose my collection to the King, for the gallery in the Louvre, subject to the charge (if the legacy is accepted) of a life annuity of two thousand four hundred francs to my friend Wilhelm Schmucke.

"If the King, as usufructuary of the Louvre collection, should refuse the legacy with the charge upon it, the said pictures shall form a part of the estate which I leave to my friend Schmucke, on condition that he shall deliver the 'Monkey's Head,' by Goya, to my cousin, President Camusot; a 'Flower Piece,' the tulips, by Abraham Mignon, to M. Trognon, notary (whom I appoint as my executor); and allow Mme. Cibot, who has acted as my housekeeper for ten years, the sum of two hundred francs per annum

"Finally, my friend Schmucke is to give the 'Descent from the Cross,' Rubens' sketch for his great picture at Antwerp, to adorn a chapel in the parish church, in grateful acknowledgment of M. Duplanty's kindness to me; for to him I owe it that I can die as a Christian and a Catholic" — So ran the will.

"This is ruin!" mused Fraisier, "the ruin of all my hopes. Ha! I begin to believe all that the Présidente told me about this old artist and his cunning."

"Well?" La Cibot came back to say.

"Your gentleman is a monster. He is leaving everything to

the Crown. Now, you cannot plead against the Crown. . . . The will cannot be disputed. . . . We are robbed, ruined, spoiled, and murdered!"

"What has he left to me?"

"Two hundred francs a year."

"A pretty comedown! . . . Why, he is a finished scoundrel!"

"Go and see," said Fraisier, "and I will put your scoundrel's will back again in the envelope."

While Mme. Cibot's back was turned, Fraisier nimbly slipped a sheet of blank paper into the envelope; the will he put in his pocket. He next proceeded to seal the envelope again so cleverly that he showed the seal to Mme. Cibot when she returned, and asked her if she could see the slightest trace of the operation. La Cibot took up the envelope, felt it over, assured herself that it was not empty, and heaved a deep sigh. She had entertained hopes that Fraisier himself would have burned the unlucky document while she was out of the room.

"Well, my dear M. Fraisier, what is to be done?"

"Oh! that is your affair! I am not one of the next of kin, myself; but if I had the slightest claim to any of *that*" (indicating the collection), "I know very well what I should do."

"That is just what I want to know," La Cibot answered, with sufficient simplicity

"There is a fire in the grate——" he said. Then he rose to go

"After all, no one will know about it but you and me——" began La Cibot.

"It can never be proved that a will existed," asserted the man of law.

"And you?"

"I? . . . If M. Pons dies intestate, you shall have a hundred thousand francs."

"Oh yes, no doubt," returned she. "People promise you heaps of money, and when they come by their own, and there is talk of paying, they swindle you like——"

"Like Élie Magus," she was going to say, but she stopped herself just in time.

"I am going," said Fraisier; "it is not to your interest that I should be found here; but I shall see you again downstairs."

La Cibot shut the door and returned with the sealed packet in her hand. She had quite made up her mind to burn it; but

as she went towards the bedroom fireplace, she felt the grasp of a hand on each arm, and saw — Schmucke on one hand, and Pons himself on the other, leaning against the partition wall on either side of the door.

La Cibot cried out, and fell face downwards in a fit; real or feigned, no one ever knew the truth. This sight produced such an impression on Pons that a deadly faintness came upon him, and Schmucke left the woman on the floor to help Pons back to bed. The friends trembled in every limb, they had set themselves a hard task, it was done, but it had been too much for their strength. When Pons lay in bed again, and Schmucke had regained strength to some extent, he heard a sound of sobbing. La Cibot, on her knees, bursting into tears, held out supplicating hands to them in very expressive pantomime.

"It was pure curiosity!" she sobbed, when she saw that Pons and Schmucke were paying any attention to her proceedings. "Pure curiosity; a woman's fault, you know. But I did not know how else to get a sight of your will, and I brought it back again——"

"Go!" said Schmucke, standing erect, his tall figure gaining in height by the full height of his indignation. "You are a monster! You dried to kill mein goot Bons! He is right. You are worse than a monster, you are a lost soul!"

La Cibot saw the look of abhorrence in the frank German's face; she rose, proud as Tartufe, gave Schmucke a glance which made him quake, and went out, carrying off under her dress an exquisite little picture of Metzu's pointed out by Élie Magus. "A diamond," he had called it. Fraisier downstairs in the porter's lodge was waiting to hear that La Cibot had burned the envelope and the sheet of blank paper inside it. Great was his astonishment when he beheld his fair client's agitation and dismay.

"What has happened?"

"*This* has happened, my dear M. Fraisier. Under pretense of giving me good advice and telling me what to do, you have lost me my annuity and the gentlemen's confidence. . . ."

One of the word tornadoes in which she excelled was in full progress, but Fraisier cut her short.

"This is idle talk. The facts, the facts! and be quick about it."

"Well; it came about in this way," — and she told him of the scene which she had just come through.

"You have lost nothing through me," was Fraisier's comment. "The gentlemen had their doubts, or they would not have set this trap for you. They were lying in wait and spying upon you. . . . You have not told me everything," he added, with a tiger's glance at the woman before him.

"*I* hide anything from you!" cried she—"after all that we have done together!" she added with a shudder.

"My dear madam, *I* have done nothing blameworthy," returned Fraisier. Evidently he meant to deny his nocturnal visit to Pons' rooms.

Every hair on La Cibot's head seemed to scorch her, while a sense of icy cold swept over her from head to foot.

"*What?*" . . . she faltered in bewilderment.

"Here is a criminal charge on the face of it. . . . You may be accused of suppressing the will," Fraisier made answer dryly.

La Cibot started.

"Don't be alarmed; I am your legal adviser. I only wished to show you how easy it is, in one way or another, to do as I once explained to you. Let us see, now; what have you done that this simple German should be hiding in the room?"

"Nothing at all, unless it was that scene the other day when I stood M. Pons out that his eyes dazzled. And ever since, the two gentlemen have been as different as can be. So you have brought all my troubles upon me; I might have lost my influence with M. Pons, but I was sure of the German; just now he was talking of marrying me or of taking me with him—it is all one."

The excuse was so plausible that Fraisier was fain to be satisfied with it. "You need fear nothing," he resumed. "I gave you my word that you shall have your money, and I shall keep my word. The whole matter, so far, was up in the air, but now it is as good as bank notes. . . . You shall have at least twelve hundred francs per annum. . . . But, my good lady, you must act intelligently under my orders."

"Yes, my dear M. Fraisier," said La Cibot, with cringing servility. She was completely subdued.

"Very good. Good-by," and Fraisier went, taking the dangerous document with him. He reached home in great spirits. The will was a terrible weapon.

"Now," thought he, "I have a hold on Mme. la Présidente

de Marville; she must keep her word with me. If she did not, she would lose the property."

At daybreak, when Rémonencq had taken down his shutters and left his sister in charge of the shop, he came, after his wont of late, to inquire for his good friend Cibot. The portress was contemplating the Metzu, privately wondering how a little bit of painted wood could be worth such a lot of money.

"Aha!" said he, looking over her shoulder, "that is the one picture which M. Élie Magus regretted; with that little bit of a thing, he says, his happiness would be complete."

"What would he give for it?" asked La Cibot.

"Why, if you will promise to marry me within a year of widowhood, I will undertake to get twenty thousand francs for it from Élie Magus; and unless you marry me you will never get a thousand francs for the picture."

"Why not?"

"Because you would be obliged to give a receipt for the money, and then you might have a lawsuit with the heirs at law. If you were my wife, I myself should sell the thing to M. Magus, and in the way of business it is enough to make an entry in the daybook, and I should note that M. Schmucke sold it to me. There, leave the panel with me. . . . If your husband were to die you might have a lot of bother over it, but no one would think it odd that I should have a picture in the shop. . . . You know me quite well. Besides, I will give you a receipt if you like."

The covetous portress felt that she had been caught; she agreed to a proposal which was to bind her for the rest of her life to the marine-store dealer.

"You are right," said she, as she locked the picture away in a chest; "bring me the bit of writing."

III. The Death of Cousin Pons.

Towards ten o'clock there was a sort of commotion in the street; M. Cibot was taking the Sacrament. All the friends of the pair, all the porters and porters' wives in the Rue de Normandie and neighboring streets, had crowded into the lodge, under the archway, and stood on the pavement outside. Nobody so much as noticed the arrival of M. Léopold Hannequin and a brother lawyer. Schwab and Brunner

reached Pons' rooms unseen by Mme. Cibot. The notary, inquiring for Pons, was shown upstairs by the portress of a neighboring house. Brunner remembered his previous visit to the museum, and went straight in with his friend Schwab.

Pons formally revoked his previous will and constituted Schmucke his universal legatee. This accomplished, he thanked Schwab and Brunner, and earnestly begged M. Léopold Hannequin to protect Schmucke's interests. The demands made upon him by last night's scene with La Cibot, and this final settlement of his worldly affairs, left him so faint and exhausted that Schmucke begged Schwab to go for the Abbé Duplanty; it was Pons' great desire to take the Sacrament, and Schmucke could not bring himself to leave his friend. . . .

A few minutes later, Dr. Poulain stood by Pons' pillow watching the progress made by death, and Schmucke's vain efforts to persuade his friend to consent to the operation. To all the poor German's despairing entreaties Pons only replied by a shake of the head and occasional impatient movements; till, after a while, he summoned up all his fast-failing strength to say, with a heartrending look:—

"Do let me die in peace!"

Schmucke almost died of sorrow, but he took Pons' hand, and softly kissed it, and held it between his own, as if trying a second time to give his own vitality to his friend.

Just at this moment the bell rang, and Dr. Poulain, going to the door, admitted the Abbé Duplanty.

"Our poor patient is struggling in the grasp of death," he said. "All will be over in a few hours. You will send a priest, no doubt, to watch to-night. But it is time that Mme. Cantinet came, as well as a woman to do the work, for M. Schmucke is quite unfit to think of anything: I am afraid for his reason; and there are valuables here which ought to be in the custody of honest persons."

The Abbé Duplanty, a kindly, upright priest, guileless and unsuspicious, was struck with the truth of Dr. Poulain's remarks. He had, moreover, a certain belief in the doctor of the quarter. So on the threshold of the death chamber he stopped and beckoned to Schmucke, but Schmucke could not bring himself to loosen the grasp of the hand that grew tighter and tighter. Pons seemed to think that he was slipping over the edge of a precipice and must catch at something to save

himself. But, as many know, the dying are haunted by an hallucination that leads them to snatch at things about them, like men eager to save their most precious possessions from a fire. Presently Pons released Schmucke to clutch at the bedclothes, dragging them and huddling them about himself with a hasty, covetous movement significant and painful to see.

"What will you do, left alone with your dead friend?" asked M. l'Abbé Duplanty when Schmucke came to the door. "You have not Mme. Cibot now——"

"Ein monster dat haf killed Bons!"

"But you must have somebody with you," began Dr. Poulain. "Some one must sit up with the body to-night."

"I shall sit up; I shall say die prayers to Gott," the innocent German answered.

"But you must eat—and who is to cook for you now?" asked the doctor.

"Grief haf taken afay mein abbetite," Schmucke said simply.

"And some one must give notice to the registrar," said Poulain, "and lay out the body, and order the funeral; and the person who sits up with the body and the priest will want meals. Can you do this all by yourself? A man cannot die like a dog in the capital of the civilized world."

Schmucke opened wide eyes of dismay. A brief fit of madness seized him.

"But Bons shall not tie! . . ." he cried aloud. "I shall safe him!"

"You cannot go without sleep much longer, and who will take your place? Some one must look after M. Pons, and give him drink, and nurse him——"

"Ah! dat is drue."

"Very well," said the Abbé, "I am thinking of sending you Mme. Cantinet, a good and honest creature——"

The practical details of the care of the dead bewildered Schmucke, till he was fain to die with his friend.

"He is a child," said the doctor, turning to the Abbé Duplanty.

"Ein child," Schmucke repeated mechanically.

"There, then," said the curate; "I will speak to Mme. Cantinet, and send her to you."

"Do not trouble yourself," said the doctor; "I am going home, and she lives in the next house."

The dying seem to struggle with Death as with an invisible assassin; in the agony at the last, as the final thrust is made, the act of dying seems to be a conflict, a hand-to-hand fight for life. Pons had reached the supreme moment. At the sound of his groans and cries, the three standing in the doorway hurried to the bedside. Then came the last blow, smiting asunder the bonds between soul and body, striking down to life's sources; and suddenly Pons regained for a few brief moments the perfect calm that follows the struggle. He came to himself, and with the serenity of death in his face he looked round almost smilingly at them.

"Ah, doctor, I have had a hard time of it; but you were right, I am doing better. Thank you, my good Abbé; I was wondering what had become of Schmucke——"

"Schmucke has had nothing to eat since yesterday evening, and now it is four o'clock! You have no one with you now, and it would not be wise to send for Mme. Cibot."

"She is capable of anything!" said Pons, without attempting to conceal all his abhorrence at the sound of her name. "It is true, Schmucke ought to have some trustworthy person."

"M. Duplanty and I have been thinking about you both——"

"Ah! thank you, I had not thought of that."

"—and M. Duplanty suggests that you should have Mme. Cantinet——"

"Oh! Mme. Cantinet who lets the chairs!" exclaimed Pons. "Yes; she is an excellent creature."

"She has no liking for Mme. Cibot," continued the doctor, "and she would take good care of M. Schmucke——"

"Send her to me, M. Duplanty . . . send her and her husband too. I shall be easy. Nothing will be stolen here."

Schmucke had taken Pons' hand again, and held it joyously in his own. Pons was almost well again, he thought.

"Let us go, Monsieur l'Abbé," said the doctor. "I will send Mme. Cantinet round at once. I see how it is. She perhaps may not find M. Pons alive."

While the Abbé Duplanty was persuading Pons to engage Mme. Cantinet as his nurse, Fraisier had sent for her. He had plied the beadle's wife with sophistical reasoning and subtlety. It was difficult to resist his corrupting influence. And as for

Mme. Cantinet—a lean, sallow woman, with large teeth and thin lips—her intelligence, as so often happens with women of the people, had been blunted by a hard life, till she had come to look upon the slenderest daily wage as prosperity. She soon consented to take Mme. Sauvage with her as general servant.

Mme. Sauvage had had her instructions already. She had undertaken to weave a web of iron wire about the two musicians, and to watch them as a spider watches a fly caught in the toils; and her reward was to be a tobacconist's license. Fraisier had found a convenient opportunity of getting rid of his so-called foster mother, while he posted her as a detective and policeman to supervise Mme. Cantinet. As there was a servant's bedroom and a little kitchen included in the apartment, La Sauvage could sleep on a truckle-bed and cook for the German. Dr. Poulain came with the two women just as Pons drew his last breath. Schmucke was sitting beside his friend, all unconscious of the crisis, holding the hand that slowly grew colder in his grasp. He signed to Mme. Cantinet to be silent; but Mme. Sauvage's soldierly figure surprised him so much that he started in spite of himself, a kind of homage to which the virago was quite accustomed.

"M. Duplanty answers for this lady," whispered Mme. Cantinet by way of introduction. "She once was cook to a bishop; she is honesty itself; she will do the cooking."

"Oh! you may talk out loud," wheezed the stalwart dame. "The poor gentleman is dead. . . . He has just gone."

A shrill cry broke from Schmucke. He felt Pons' cold hand stiffening in his, and sat staring into his friend's eyes; the look in them would have driven him mad, if Mme. Sauvage, doubtless accustomed to scenes of this sort, had not come to the bedside with a mirror which she held over the lips of the dead. When she saw that there was no mist upon the surface, she briskly snatched Schmucke's hand away.

"Just take away your hand, sir; you may not be able to do it in a little while. You do not know how the bones harden. A corpse grows cold very quickly. If you do not lay out a body while it is warm, you have to break the joints later on. . . ."

And so it was this terrible woman who closed the poor dead musician's eyes.

With a businesslike dexterity acquired in ten years of experience, she stripped and straightened the body, laid the

arms by the sides, and covered the face with the bedclothes, exactly as a shopman wraps a parcel.

"A sheet will be wanted to lay him out.—Where is there a sheet?" she demanded, turning on the terror-stricken Schmucke.

He had watched the religious ritual with its deep reverence for the creature made for such high destinies in heaven; and now he saw his dead friend treated simply as a thing in this packing process—saw with the sharp pain that dissolves the very elements of thought.

"Do as you vill——" he answered mechanically. The innocent creature for the first time in his life had seen a man die, and that man was Pons, his only friend, the one human being who understood him and loved him.

"I will go and ask Mme. Cibot where the sheets are kept," said La Sauvage.

"A truckle-bed will be wanted for the person to sleep upon," Mme. Cantinet came to tell Schmucke.

Schmucke nodded and broke out into weeping. Mme. Cantinet left the unhappy man in peace; but an hour later she came back to say:—

"Have you any money, sir, to pay for the things?"

The look that Schmucke gave Mme. Cantinet would have disarmed the fiercest hate; it was the white, blank, peaked face of death that he turned upon her, as an explanation that met everything.

"Dake it all and leaf me to mein prayers and tears," he said, and knelt.

Mme. Sauvage went to Fraisier with the news of Pons' death. Fraisier took a cab and went to the Présidente. To-morrow she must give him the power of attorney to enable him to act for the heirs.

Another hour went by, and Mme. Cantinet came again to Schmucke.

"I have been to Mme. Cibot, sir, who knows all about things here," she said. "I asked her to tell me where everything is kept. But she almost jawed me to death with her abuse. . . . Sir, do listen to me. . . ."

Schmucke looked up at the woman, and she went on, innocent of any barbarous intention, for women of her class are accustomed to take the worst of moral suffering passively, as a matter of course.

"We must have linen for the shroud, sir, we must have money to buy a truckle-bed for the person to sleep upon, and some things for the kitchen — plates, and dishes, and glasses, for a priest will be coming to pass the night here, and the person says that there is absolutely nothing in the kitchen."

"And what is more, sir, I must have coal and firing if I am to get the dinner ready," echoed La Sauvage, "and not a thing can I find. Not that there is anything so very surprising in that, as La Cibot used to do everything for you ——"

Schmucke lay at the feet of the dead; he heard nothing, knew nothing, saw nothing. Mme. Cantinet pointed to him. "My dear woman, you would not believe me," she said. "Whatever you say, he does not answer."

"Very well, child," said La Sauvage; "now I will show you what to do in a case of this kind."

She looked round the room as a thief looks in search of possible hiding places for money; then she went straight to Pons' chest, opened the first drawer, saw the bag in which Schmucke had put the rest of the money after the sale of the pictures, and held it up before him. He nodded mechanically.

"Here is money, child," said La Sauvage, turning to Mme. Cantinet. "I will count it first and take enough to buy everything we want — wine, provisions, wax candles, all sorts of things, in fact, for there is nothing in the house. . . . Just look in the drawers for a sheet to bury him in. I certainly was told that the poor gentleman was simple, but I don't know what he is; he is worse. He is like a newborn child; we shall have to feed him with a funnel."

The women went about their work, and Schmucke looked on precisely as an idiot might have done. Broken down with sorrow, wholly absorbed, in a half-cataleptic state, he could not take his eyes from the face that seemed to fascinate him, Pons' face refined by the absolute repose of Death. Schmucke hoped to die; everything was alike indifferent. If the room had been on fire he would not have stirred.

"There are twelve hundred and fifty francs here," La Sauvage told him.

Schmucke shrugged his shoulders.

But when La Sauvage came near to measure the body by laying the sheet over it, before cutting out the shroud, a horrible struggle ensued between her and the poor German. Schmucke was furious. He behaved like a dog that watches

by his dead master's body, and shows his teeth at all who try to touch it. La Sauvage grew impatient. She grasped him, set him in the armchair, and held him down with herculean strength.

"Go on, child; sew him in his shroud," she said, turning to Mme. Cantinet.

As soon as this operation was completed, La Sauvage set Schmucke back in his place at the foot of the bed.

"Do you understand?" said she. "The poor dead man lying there must be done up, there is no help for it."



THE ESSENCE OF SIN.

By HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

If I have sinned in act, I may repent,
  If I have erred in thought, I may disclaim
  My silent error, and yet feel no shame:
But if my soul, big with an ill intent,
Guilty in will, by fate be innocent,
  Or being bad, yet murmurs at the curse
  And incapacity of being worse,
That makes my hungry passion still keep Lent
  In keen expectance of a Carnival,
Where in all worlds that round the sun revolve,
  And shed their influence on this passive ball,
Lives there a power that can my soul absolve?
Could any sin survive and be forgiven,
One sinful wish would make a hell of heaven.



VAIN VIRTUES.[1]

By DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

What is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?
  None of the sins,—but this and that fair deed
  Which a soul's sin at length could supersede
These yet are virgins, whom death's timely knell
Might once have sainted; whom the fiends compel
  Together now, in snake-bound shuddering sheaves
  Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves
Their refuse maidenhood abominable.

[1] By permission of Ellis & Elvey. (Cr 8vo Price 6s)



THE HOME OF HARTLEY COLERIDGE AND DE QUINCEY, NAB COTTAGE, RYDAL

Night sucks them down, the tribute of the pit,
  Whose names, half entered in the book of Life,
    Were God's desire at noon. And as their hair
And eyes sink last, the Torturer designs no whit
  To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined wife,
    The Sin still blithe on earth that sent them there.



LOST DAYS.[1]

By DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

The lost days of my life until to-day,
  What were they, could I see them on the street
  Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food but trodden into clay?
Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?
  Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
  Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?

I do not see them here, but after death
  God knows I know the faces I shall see,
Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.
  "I am thyself,—what hast thou done to me?"
"And I—and I—thyself," (lo! each one saith,)
  "And thou thyself to all eternity!"



TRICKED OUT OF HERSELF.

By ALESSANDRO MANZONI.

(From "The Betrothed.")

[Count Alessandro Manzoni, Italian novelist and poet, was born in Milan, March 8, 1784, graduated at the University of Pavia. His mother and grandfather were noted writers. He wrote religious hymns of high rank, but his first famous composition was an ode on the death of Napoleon He also wrote dramas of great repute; as "Conte di Carmagnola" and "Adelchi", but his most celebrated work, the classic novel of modern Italy, is "I Promessi Sposi"

[1] By permission of Ellis & Elvey. (Cr. 8vo Price 6s)

(The Betrothed Pair), a historical romance (1827). He was an ardent patriot, deeply interested in the reconstruction of Italy. He died May 22, 1873]

SHE was the youngest daughter of the Prince——, a Milanese nobleman, who was esteemed one of the richest men of the city. But the unbounded idea he entertained of his title made his property appear scarcely sufficient, nay, even too limited to maintain a proper appearance; and all his attention was turned towards keeping it, at least, such as it was, in one line, so far as it depended upon himself. How many children he had does not appear from history: it merely records that he had designed all the younger branches of both sexes for the cloister, that he might leave his property entire to the eldest son, destined to perpetuate the family: that is, bring up children that he might torment himself in tormenting them after his father's example. Our unhappy Signora was yet unborn when her condition was irrevocably determined upon. It only remained to decide whether she should be a monk or a nun, a decision, for which, not her assent, but her presence, was required. When she was born, the Prince, her father, wishing to give her a name that would always immediately suggest the idea of a cloister, and which had been born by a saint of high family, called her Gertrude. Dolls dressed like nuns were the first playthings put into her hands; then images in nuns' habits, accompanying the gift with admonitions to prize them highly, as very precious things, and with that affirmative interrogation, "Beautiful, eh?" When the Prince, or the Princess, or the young Prince, the only one of the sons brought up at home, would represent the happy prospects of the child, it seemed as if they could find no other way of expressing their ideas than by the words, "What a lady abbess!" No one, however, directly said to her, "You must become a nun." It was an intention understood and touched upon incidentally in every conversation relating to her future destiny. If at any time the little Gertrude indulged in rebellious or imperious behavior, to which her natural disposition easily inclined her, "You are a naughty little girl," they would say to her: "this behavior is very unbecoming. When you are a lady abbess, you shall then command with the rod: you can then do as you please." On another occasion, the Prince reproving her for her too free and familiar manners, into which she easily fell: "Hey! hey!" he cried; "they are not becoming to one of your rank. If you wish some day to engage the respect that is due to you, learn from henceforth to

be more reserved: remember you ought to be in everything the first in the monastery, because you carry your rank wherever you go."

Such language imbued the mind of the little girl with the implicit idea that she was to be a nun; but her father's words had more effect upon her than all the others put together. The manners of the Prince were habitually those of an austere master, but when treating of the future prospects of his children, there shone forth in every word and tone an immovability of resolution which inspired the idea of a fatal necessity.

At six years of age, Gertrude was placed for education, and still more as a preparatory step towards the vocation imposed upon her, in the monastery where we have seen her; and the selection of the place was not without design. The worthy guide of the two women has said that the father of the Signora was the first man in Monza; and, comparing this testimony, whatever it may be worth, with some other indications which our anonymous author unintentionally suffers to escape here and there, we may very easily assert that he was the feudal head of that country. However it may be, he enjoyed here very great authority, and thought that here, better than elsewhere, his daughter would be treated with that distinction and deference which might induce her to choose this monastery as her perpetual abode. Nor was he deceived: the then abbess and several intriguing nuns — who had the management of affairs, finding themselves entangled in some disputes with another monastery, and with a noble family of the country, were very glad of the acquisition of such a support — received with much gratitude the honor bestowed upon them, and fully entered into the intentions of the Prince concerning the permanent settlement of his daughter; intentions on every account entirely consonant with their interests. Immediately on Gertrude's entering the monastery, she was called by Antonomasia, the Signorina. A separate place was assigned her at table, and a private sleeping apartment; her conduct was proposed as an example to others; indulgences and caresses were bestowed upon her without end, accompanied with that respectful familiarity so attractive to children, when observed in those whom they see treating other children with an habitual air of superiority. Not that all the nuns had conspired to draw the poor child into the snare; many there were of simple and undesigning minds, who would have shrunk with horror from the

thought of sacrificing a child to interested views; but all of them being intent on their several individual occupations, some did not notice all these maneuvers, others did not discern how dishonest they were; some abstained from looking into the matter, and others were silent rather than give useless offense. There was one, too, who, remembering how she had been induced by similar arts to do what she afterwards repented of, felt a deep compassion for the poor little innocent, and showed that compassion by bestowing on her tender and melancholy caresses, which she was far from suspecting were tending towards the same result; and thus the affair proceeded. Perhaps it might have gone on thus to the end, if Gertrude had been the only little girl in the monastery; but, among her schoolfellows, there were some who knew they were designed for marriage.

The little Gertrude, brought up with high ideas of her superiority, talked very magnificently of her future destiny as abbess and principal of the monastery; she wished to be an object of envy to the others on every account, and saw with astonishment and vexation that some of them paid no attention to all her boasting. To the majestic, but circumscribed and cold, images the headship of a monastery could furnish, they opposed the varied and bright pictures of a husband, guests, routs, towns, tournaments, retinues, dress, and equipages. Such glittering visions roused in Gertrude's mind that excitement and ardor which a large basketful of freshly gathered flowers would produce, if placed before a beehive. Her parents and teachers had cultivated and increased her natural vanity, to reconcile her to the cloisters; but when this passion was excited by ideas so much calculated to stimulate it, she quickly entered into them with a more lively and spontaneous ardor. That she might not be below her companions, and influenced at the same time by her new turn of mind, she replied that, at the time of decision, no one could compel her to take the veil without her consent; that she, too, could marry, live in a palace, enjoy the world, and that better than any of them; that she *could* if she wished it; that she *would* if she wished it; and that, in fact, she *did* wish it. The idea of the necessity of her consent, which hitherto had been, as it were, unnoticed, and hidden in a corner of her mind, now unfolded and displayed itself in all its importance. On every occasion she called it to her aid, that she might enjoy in tranquillity the

images of a self-chosen future. Together with this idea, however, there invariably appeared another; that the refusal of this consent involved rebellion against her father, who already believed it, or pretended to believe it, a decided thing; and at this remembrance, the child's mind was very far from feeling the confidence which her words proclaimed. She would then compare herself with her companions, whose confidence was of a far different kind, and experienced lamentably that envy of their condition which, at first, she endeavored to awaken in them. From envy she changed to hatred; which she displayed in contempt, rudeness, and sarcastic speeches; while, sometimes, the conformity of her inclinations and hopes with theirs, suppressed her spite, and created in her an apparent and transient friendship. At times, longing to enjoy something real and present, she would feel a complacency in the distinctions accorded to her, and make others sensible of this superiority; and then, again, unable to tolerate the solitude of her fears and desires, she would go in search of her companions, her haughtiness appeased, almost, indeed, imploring of them kindness, counsel, and encouragement. In the midst of such pitiable warfare with herself and others, she passed her childhood, and entered upon that critical age at which an almost mysterious power seems to take possession of the soul, arousing, refreshing, invigorating all the inclinations and ideas, and sometimes transforming them, or turning them into some unlooked-for channel. That which, until now, Gertrude had most distinctly figured in these dreams of the future, was external splendor and pomp; a something soothing and kindly, which, from the first, was lightly, and, as it were, mistily, diffused over her mind, now began to spread itself and predominate in her imagination. It took possession of the most secret recesses of her heart, as of a gorgeous retreat; hither she retired from present objects; here she entertained various personages strangely compounded of the confused remembrances of childhood, the little she had seen of the external world, and what she had gathered in conversations with her companions; she entertained herself with them, talked to them, and replied in their name; here she gave commands, and here she received homage of every kind. At times, the thoughts of religion would come to disturb these brilliant and toilsome revels. But religion, such as it had been taught to this poor girl, and such as she had received it, did not prohibit pride, but rather sancti-

fied it, and proposed it as a means of obtaining earthly felicity. Robbed thus of its essence, it was no longer religion, but a phantom like the rest. In the intervals in which this phantom occupied the first place, and ruled in Gertrude's fancy, the unhappy girl, oppressed by confused terrors, and urged by an indefinite idea of duty, imagined that her repugnance to the cloister, and her resistance to the wishes of her superiors in the choice of her state of life, was a fault; and she resolved in her heart to expiate it, by voluntarily taking the veil.

It was a rule that, before a young person could be received as a nun, she should be examined by an ecclesiastic, called the vicar of the nuns, or by some one deputed by him; that it might be seen whether the lot were her deliberate choice or not; and this examination could not take place for a year after she had, by a written request, signified her desire to the vicar. Those nuns who had taken upon themselves the sad office of inducing Gertrude to bind herself forever with the least possible consciousness of what she was doing, seized one of the moments we have described to persuade her to write and sign such a memorial. And, in order the more easily to persuade her to such a course, they failed not to affirm and impress upon her, what, indeed, was quite true, that, after all, it was a mere formality, which could have no effect, without other and posterior steps, depending entirely upon her own will. Nevertheless the memorial had scarcely reached its destination, before Gertrude repented having written it. Then she repented of these repentances; and thus days and months were spent in an incessant alternation of wishes and regrets. For a long while she concealed this act from her companions; sometimes from fear of exposing her good resolution to opposition and contradiction, at others from shame at revealing her error; but, at last, the desire of unburdening her mind, and of seeking advice and encouragement, conquered.

Another rule was this; that a young girl was not to be admitted to this examination upon the course of life she had chosen, until she had resided for at least a month out of the convent where she had been educated. A year had almost passed since the presentation of this memorial; and it had been signified to Gertrude that she would shortly be taken from the monastery, and sent to her father's house, for this one month, there to take all the necessary steps towards the completion of the work she had really begun. The Prince, and

the rest of the family, considered it an assured thing, as if it had already taken place. Not so, however, his daughter; instead of taking fresh steps, she was engaged in considering how she could withdraw the first. In her perplexity, she resolved to open her mind to one of her companions, the most sincere and always the readiest to give spirited advice. She advised Gertrude to inform her father, by letter, that she had changed her mind, since she had not the courage to pronounce to his face, at the proper time, a bold *I will not.* And as gratuitous advice in this world is very rare, the counselor made Gertrude pay for this by abundance of raillery upon her want of spirit. The letter was agreed upon with three or four confidantes, written in private, and dispatched by means of many deeply studied artifices. Gertrude waited with great anxiety for a reply; but none came; excepting that, a few days afterwards, the Abbess, taking her aside, with an air of mystery, displeasure, and compassion, let fall some obscure hints about the great anger of her father, and a wrong step she must have been taking; leaving her to understand, however, that if she behaved well, she might still hope that all would be forgotten. The poor young girl understood it, and dared not venture to ask any further explanation.

At last, the day so much dreaded, and so ardently wished for, arrived. Although Gertrude knew well enough that she was going to a great struggle, yet to leave the monastery, to pass the bounds of those walls in which she had been for eight years immured, to traverse the open country in a carriage, to see once more the city and her home, filled her with sensations of tumultuous joy. As to the struggle, with the direction of her confidantes, she had already taken her measures, and concerted her plans. Either they will force me, thought she, and then I will be immovable — I will be humble and respectful, but will refuse; the chief point is not to pronounce another "*Yes,*" and I will not pronounce it. Or they will catch me with good words; and I will be better than they; I will weep, I will implore, I will move them to pity; at last, will only entreat that I may not be sacrificed. But, as it often happens in similar cases of foresight, neither one nor the other supposition was realized. Days passed, and neither her father, nor any one else, spoke to her about the petition, or the recantation; and no proposal was made to her, with either coaxing or threatening. Her parents were serious, sad, and morose,

towards her, without ever giving a reason for such behavior. It was only to be understood that they regarded her as faulty and unworthy; a mysterious anathema seemed to hang over her, and divide her from the rest of her family, merely suffering so much intercourse as was necessary to make her feel her subjection. Seldom, and only at certain fixed hours, was she admitted to the company of her parents and elder brother. In the conversations of these three there appeared to reign a great confidence, which rendered the exclusion of Gertrude doubly sensible and painful. No one addressed her; and if she ventured timidly to make a remark, unless very evidently called for, her words were either unnoticed, or were responded to by a careless, contemptuous, or severe look. If unable any longer to endure so bitter and humiliating a distinction, she sought and endeavored to mingle with the family, and implored a little affection; she soon heard some indirect but clear hint thrown out about her choice of a monastic life, and was given to understand that there was one way of regaining the affection of the family; and since she would not accept of it on these conditions, she was obliged to draw back, to refuse the first advances towards the kindness she so much desired, and to continue in her state of excommunication; continue in it, too, with a certain appearance of being to blame.

Such impressions from surrounding objects painfully contradicted the bright visions with which Gertrude had been so much occupied, and which she still secretly indulged in her heart. She had hoped that, in her splendid and much-frequented home, she should have enjoyed at least some real taste of the pleasures she had so long imagined; but she found herself woefully deceived. The confinement was as strict and close at home as in the convent; to walk out for recreation was never even spoken of; and a gallery that led from the house to an adjoining church, obviated the sole necessity there might have been to go into the street. The company was more uninteresting, more scarce, and less varied than in the monastery. At every announcement of a visitor, Gertrude was obliged to go upstairs, and remain with some old woman in the service of the family; and here she dined whenever there was company. The domestic servants concurred in behavior and language with the example and intentions of their master; and Gertrude, who by inclination would have treated them with ladylike unaffected familiarity; and who, in the rank in

which she was placed, would have esteemed it a favor if they had shown her any little mark of kindness as an equal, and even have stooped to ask it, was now humbled and annoyed at being treated with a manifest indifference, although accompanied by a slight obsequiousness of formality. She could not, however, but observe, that one of these servants, a page, appeared to bear her a respect very different to the others, and to feel a peculiar kind of compassion for her. The behavior of this youth approached more nearly than anything she had yet seen to the state of things that Gertrude had pictured to her imagination, and more resembled the doings of her ideal characters. By degrees, a strange transformation was discernible in the manners of the young girl; there appeared a new tranquillity, and at the same time a restlessness, differing from her usual disquietude; her conduct was that of one who had found a treasure which oppresses him, which he incessantly watches, and hides from the view of others. Gertrude kept her eyes on this page more closely than ever; and, however it came to pass, she was surprised one unlucky morning by a chambermaid, while secretly folding up a letter, in which it would have been better had she written nothing. After a brief altercation, the maid got possession of the letter, and carried it to her master. The terror of Gertrude at the sound of his footsteps, may be more easily imagined than described. It was *her* father; he was irritated, and she felt herself guilty. But when he stood before her with that frowning brow, and the ill-fated letter in his hand, she would gladly have been a hundred feet under ground, not to say in a cloister. His words were few, but terrible; the punishment named at the time was only to be confined in her own room under the charge of the maid who had made the discovery; but this was merely a foretaste, a temporary provision; he threatened, and left a vague promise of some other obscure, undefined, and therefore more dreadful punishment.

The page was, of course, immediately dismissed, and was menaced with something terrible, if ever he should breathe a syllable about the past. In giving him this intimation, the Prince seconded it with two solemn blows, to associate in his mind with this adventure a remembrance that would effectually remove every temptation to make a boast of it. Some kind of pretext to account for the dismissal of a page was not difficult to find; as to the young lady, it was reported that she was ill.

She was now left to her fears, her shame, her remorse, and her dread of the future; with the sole company of this woman, whom she hated as the witness of her guilt, and the cause of her disgrace. She, in her turn, hated Gertrude, by whom she was reduced, she knew not for how long, to the wearisome life of a jailer, and had become forever the guardian of a dangerous secret.

The first confused tumult of these feelings subsided by degrees; but each remembrance recurring by turns to her mind, was nourished there, and remained to torment her more distinctly, and at leisure. Whatever could the punishment be, so mysteriously threatened? Many, various, and strange were the ideas that suggested themselves to the ardent and inexperienced imagination of Gertrude. The prospect that appeared most probable was, that she would be taken back to the monastery at Monza, no longer to appear as the Signorina, but as a guilty person, to be shut up there — who knew how long! who knew with what kind of treatment! Among the many annoyances of such a course, perhaps the most annoying was the dread of the shame she should feel. The expressions, the words, the very commas of the unfortunate letter, were turned over and over in her memory: she fancied them noticed and weighed by a reader so unexpected, so different from the one to whom they were destined in reply; she imagined that they might have come under the view of her mother, her brother, or indeed any one else; and by comparison, all the rest seemed to her a mere nothing. The image of him who had been the primary cause of all this offense failed not also frequently to beset the poor recluse; and it is impossible to describe the strange contrast this phantasm presented to those around her; so dissimilar, so serious, reserved, and threatening. But, since she could not separate his image from theirs, nor turn for a moment to those transient gratifications, without her present sorrows, as the consequence of them, suggesting themselves to her mind, she began, by degrees, to recall them less frequently, to repel the remembrance of them, and wean herself from such thoughts. She no longer willingly indulged in the bright and splendid fancies of her earlier days; they were too much opposed to her real circumstances, and to every probability for the future. The only castle in which Gertrude could conceive a tranquil and honorable retreat, which was not in the air, was the monastery, if she could make up her mind to enter it for-

ever. Such a resolution, she could not doubt, would have repaired everything, atoned for every fault, and changed her condition in a moment. Opposed to this proposal, it is true, rose up the plans and hopes of her whole childhood: but times were changed; and in the depths to which Gertrude had fallen, and in comparison of what, at times, she so much dreaded, the condition of a nun, respected, revered, and obeyed, appeared to her a bright prospect. Two sentiments of very different character, indeed, contributed, at intervals, to overcome her former aversion: sometimes remorse for a fault, and a capricious sensibility of devotion; and at other times, her pride embittered and irritated by the manners of her jailer, who (often, it must be confessed, provoked to it) revenged herself now by terrifying her with the prospect of the threatened punishment, or taunting her with the disgrace of her fault. When, however, she chose to be benign, she would assume a tone of protection, still more odious than insult. On these different occasions, the wish that Gertrude felt to escape from her clutches, and to raise herself to a condition above either her anger or pity, became so vivid and urgent that it made everything which could lead to such an end appear pleasant and agreeable.

At the end of four or five long days of confinement, Gertrude, disgusted and exasperated beyond measure by one of these sallies of her guardian, went and sat down in a corner of the room, and covering her face with her hands, remained for some time secretly indulging her rage. She then felt an overbearing longing to see some other faces, to hear some other words, to be treated differently. She thought of her father, of her family; and the idea made her shrink back in horror. But she remembered that it only depended upon her to make them her friends; and this remembrance awakened a momentary joy. Then there followed a confused and unusual sorrow for her fault, and an equal desire to expiate it. Not that her will was already determined upon such a resolution, but she had never before approached it so near. She rose from her seat, went to the table, took up the fatal pen, and wrote a letter to her father, full of enthusiasm and humiliation, of affliction and hope, imploring his pardon, and showing herself indefinitely ready to do anything that would please him who alone could grant it.

There are times when the mind, of the young especially, is so disposed that any external influence, however slight, suffices

to call forth whatever has the appearance of virtuous self-sacrifice; as a scarcely expanded flower abandons itself negligently to its fragile stem, ready to yield its fragance to the first breath of the zephyrs that float around. These moments, which others should regard with reverential awe, are exactly those which the wily and interested eagerly watch for, and seize with avidity, to fetter an unguarded will.

On the perusal of this letter the Prince —— instantly saw a door opened to the fulfillment of his early and still cherished views. He therefore sent to Gertrude to come to him, and prepared to strike the iron while it was hot. Gertrude had no sooner made her appearance, than, without raising her eyes towards her father, she threw herself upon her knees, scarcely able to articulate the word "Pardon." The Prince beckoned to her to rise, and then, in a voice little calculated to reassure her, replied, that it was not sufficient to desire and solicit forgiveness, for that was easy and natural enough to one who had been convicted of a fault, and dreaded its punishment; that, in short, it was necessary she should deserve it. Gertrude, in a subdued and trembling voice, asked what she must do. To this question the Prince (for we cannot find in our heart at this moment to give him the title of father) made no direct reply, but proceeded to speak at some length on Gertrude's fault, in words which grated upon the feelings of the poor girl like the drawing of a rough hand over a wound. He then went on to say, that even if . . . supposing he ever . . . had had at the first any intention of settling her in the world, she herself had now opposed an insuperable obstacle to such a plan; since a man of honor, as he was, could never bring himself to give to any gentleman a daughter who had shown such a specimen of her character. His wretched auditor was completely overwhelmed; and then the Prince, gradually softening his voice and language, proceeded to say that for every fault there was a remedy and a hope of mercy; that hers was one the remedy for which was very distinctly indicated; that she ought to see in this sad event a warning, as it were, that a worldly life was too full of danger for her . . .

"Ah, yes!" exclaimed Gertrude, excited by fear, subdued by a sense of shame, and overcome at the instant by a momentary tenderness of spirit.

"Ah; you see it too," replied the Prince, instantly taking up her words. "Well, let us say no more of what is past: all is

canceled. You have taken the only honorable and suitable course that remained for you; but, since you have chosen it willingly and cheerfully, it rests with me to make it pleasant to you in every possible way. I have the power of turning it to your advantage, and giving all the merit of the action to yourself, and I'll engage to do it for you." So saying, he rang a little bell that stood on the table, and said to the servant who answered it,—"The Princess and the young Prince immediately." Then turning to Gertrude, he continued: "I wish them to share in my satisfaction at once; and I wish you immediately to be treated by all as is fit and proper. You have experienced a little of the severe parent, but from henceforth you shall find me an affectionate father."

Gertrude stood thunderstruck at these words. One moment she wondered how that "yes," which had escaped her lips, could be made to mean so much: then she thought, was there no way of retracting—of restricting the sense; but the Prince's conviction seemed so unshaken, his joy so sensitively jealous, and his benignity so conditional, that Gertrude dared not utter a word to disturb them in the slightest degree.

The parties summoned quickly made their appearance, and, on seeing Gertrude, regarded her with an expression of surprise and uncertainty. But the Prince, with a cheerful and loving countenance, which immediately met with an answering look from them, said,—"Behold the wandering sheep: and I intend this to be the last word that shall awaken sad remembrances. Behold the consolation of the family! Gertrude no longer needs advisers, for she has voluntarily chosen what we desired for her good. She has determined—she has given me to understand that she has determined . . ." Here Gertrude raised towards her father a look between terror and supplication, as if imploring him to pause, but he continued boldly: "that she has determined to take the veil."

"*Brava!* well done!" exclaimed the mother and son, turning at the same time to embrace Gertrude, who received these congratulations with tears, which were interpreted as tears of satisfaction. The Prince then expatiated upon what he would do to render the situation of his daughter pleasant, and even splendid. He spoke of the distinction with which she would be regarded in the monastery and the surrounding country: that she would be like a princess, the representative of the family; that, as soon as ever her age would allow of it, she

would be raised to the first dignity, and in the mean while would be under subjection only in name. The Princess and the young Prince renewed their congratulations and applauses, while poor Gertrude stood as if possessed by a dream.

"We had better fix the day for going to Monza to make our request of the Abbess," said the Prince. "How pleased she will be! I venture to say that all the monastery will know how to estimate the honor which Gertrude does them. Likewise . . . but why not go this very day? Gertrude will be glad to take an airing."

"Let us go, then," said the Princess.

"I will go and give orders," said the young Prince.

"But . . ." suggested Gertrude, submissively.

"Softly, softly," replied the Prince, "let her decide: perhaps she does not feel inclined to-day, and would rather delay till to-morrow. Tell me, would you prefer to-day or to-morrow?"

"To-morrow," answered Gertrude, in a faint voice, thinking it something that she could get a little longer respite.

"To-morrow," pronounced the Prince, solemnly; "she has decided that we go to-morrow. In the mean while I will go and ask the vicar of the nuns to name a day for the examination."

No sooner said than done; the Prince took his departure, and absolutely went himself (no little act of condescension) to the vicar, and obtained a promise that he would attend her the day after to-morrow.

During the remainder of this day Gertrude had not two moments of quiet. She wished to have calmed her mind after so many scenes of excitement, to clear and arrange her thoughts, to render an account to herself of what she had done, and of what she was about to do, determine what she wished, and, for a moment at least, retard that machine, which, once started, was proceeding so precipitously; but there was no opening. Occupations succeeded one another without interruption — one treading, as it were, upon the heels of another. Immediately after this solemn interview, she was conducted to her mother's dressing room, there, under her superintendence, to be dressed and adorned by her own waiting maid. Scarcely was this business completed when dinner was announced. Gertrude was greeted on her way by the bows of the servants, who expressed their congratulations for her recovery; and, on reaching the

dining room, she found a few of their nearest friends, who had been hastily invited to do her honor, and to share in the general joy for the two happy events, — her restored health, and her choice of a vocation.

The young bride — (as the novices were usually distinguished, and Gertrude was saluted on all sides by this title on her first appearance) — the young bride had enough to do to reply to all the compliments that were addressed to her. She was fully sensible that every one of these answers was, as it were, an assent and confirmation; yet how could she reply otherwise? Shortly after dinner came the driving hour, and Gertrude accompanied her mother in a carriage, with two uncles who had been among the guests. After the usual tour, they entered the Strada Marina, which crossed the space now occupied by the public gardens, and was the rendezvous of the gentry who drove out for recreation after the labors of the day. The uncles addressed much of their conversation to Gertrude, as was to be expected on such a day; and one of them, who seemed to be acquainted with everybody, every carriage, every livery, and had every moment something to say about Signor this and Lady that, suddenly checked himself, and turning to his niece — "Ah, you young rogue!" exclaimed he; "you are turning your back on all these follies, — you are one of the saints; we poor worldly fellows are caught in the snare, but you are going to lead a religious life, and go to heaven in your carriage."

As evening approached they returned home, and the servants, hastily descending to meet them with lights, announced several visitors who were awaiting their return. The rumor had spread, and friends and relations crowded to pay their respects. On entering the drawing-room the young bride became the idol — the sole object of attention — the victim. Every one wished to have her to himself; one promised her pleasures, — another visits; one spoke of *Madre* this, her relation, — another of *Madre* that, an acquaintance; one extolled the climate of Monza, — another enlarged with great eloquence upon the distinctions she would there enjoy. Others, who had not yet succeeded in approaching Gertrude while thus besieged, stood watching their opportunity to address her, and felt a kind of regret until they had discharged their duty in this matter. By degrees the party dispersed, and Gertrude remained alone with the family.

"At last," said the Prince, "I have had the pleasure of seeing my daughter treated as becomes her rank. I must confess that she has conducted herself very well, and has shown that she will not be prevented making the first figure, and maintaining the dignity of the family." They then went to supper, so as to retire early, that they might be ready in good time in the morning.

Gertrude, annoyed, piqued, and at the same time a little puffed up by the compliments and ceremonies of the day, at this moment remembered all she had suffered from her jailer; and, seeing her father so ready to gratify her in everything but one, she resolved to make use of this disposition for the indulgence of at least one of the passions which tormented her. She displayed a great unwillingness again to be left alone with her maid, and complained bitterly of her treatment.

"What!" said the Prince; "did she not treat you with respect? To-morrow I will reward her as she deserves. Leave it to me, and I will get you entire satisfaction. In the mean while, a child with whom I am so well pleased must not be attended by a person she dislikes." So saying, he called another servant, and gave her orders to wait upon Gertrude, who, though certainly enjoying the satisfaction she received, was astonished at finding it so trifling, in comparison with the earnest wishes she had felt beforehand. The thought that, in in spite of her unwillingness, predominated in her imagination, was the remembrance of the fearful progress she had this day made towards her cloistral life, and the consciousness that to draw back now would require a far, far greater degree of courage and resolution than would have sufficed a few days before, and which, even *then*, she felt she did not possess.

The woman appointed to attend her was an old servant of the family, who had formerly been the young Prince's governess, having received him from the arms of his nurse, and brought him up until he was almost a young man. In him she had centered all her pleasures, all her hopes, all her pride. She was delighted at this day's decision, as if it had been her own good fortune; and Gertrude, at the close of the day, was obliged to listen to the congratulations, praises, and advice of this old woman. She told her of some of her aunts and near relations who had been very happy as nuns, because, being of so high a family, they had always enjoyed the first honors, and had been able to have a good deal of influence beyond the

walls of the convent; so that, from their parlor, they had come off victorious in undertakings in which the first ladies of the land had been quite foiled. She talked to her about the visits she would receive; she would some day be seeing the Signor Prince with his bride, who must certainly be some noble lady; and then not only the monastery, but the whole country would be in excitement. The old woman talked while undressing Gertrude; she talked after she had lain down, and even continued talking after Gertrude was asleep. Youth and fatigue had been more powerful than cares. Her sleep was troubled, disturbed, and full of tormenting dreams, but was unbroken, until the shrill voice of the old woman aroused her to prepare for her journey to Monza.

"Up, up, Signora bride; it is broad daylight, and you will want at least an hour to dress and arrange yourself. The Signora Princess is getting up; they awoke her four hours earlier than usual. The young Prince has already been down to the stables and come back, and is ready to start whenever you are. The creature is as brisk as a hare! but he was always so from a child: I have a right to say so who have nursed him in my arms. But when he's once set a going, it won't do to oppose him; for, though he is the best-tempered creature in the world, he sometimes gets impatient and storms. Poor fellow! one must pity him; it is all the effect of his temperament; and besides, this time there is some reason in it, because he is going to all this trouble for you. People must take care how they touch him at such times! he minds no one except the Signor Prince. But some day he will be the Prince himself; may it be as long as possible first, however. Quick, quick, Signorina, why do you look at me as if you were bewitched? You ought to be out of your nest at this hour."

At the idea of the impatient Prince, all the other thoughts which had crowded into Gertrude's mind on awaking, vanished before it, like a flock of sparrows on the sudden appearance of a scarecrow. She instantly obeyed, dressed herself in haste, and, after submitting to the decoration of her hair and person, went down to the saloon, where her parents and brother were assembled. She was then led to an armchair, and a cup of chocolate was brought to her, which in those days was a ceremony similar to that formerly in use among the Romans, of presenting the *toga virilis*.

When the carriage was at the door, the Prince drew his

daughter aside, and said: "Come, Gertrude, yesterday you had every attention paid you; to-day you must overcome yourself. The point is now to make a proper appearance in the monastery and the surrounding country, where you are destined to take the first place. They are expecting you." (It is unnecessary to say that the Prince had dispatched a message the preceding day to the Lady Abbess.) "They are expecting you, and all eyes will be upon you. You must maintain dignity and an easy manner. The Abbess will ask you what you wish, according to the usual form. You must reply that you request to be allowed to take the veil in the monastery where you have been so lovingly educated, and have received so many kindnesses, which is the simple truth. You will pronounce these words with an unembarrassed air; for I would not have it said that you have been drawn in, and that you don't know how to answer for yourself. These good mothers know nothing of the past: it is a secret which must remain forever buried in the family. Take care you don't put on a sorrowful or dubious countenance, which might excite any suspicion. Show of what blood you are: be courteous and modest; but remember that there, away from the family, there will be nobody above you."

Without waiting for a reply, the Prince led the way, Gertrude, the Princess, and the young Prince, following; and, going downstairs, they seated themselves in the carriage. The snares and vexations of the world, and the happy, blessed life of the cloister, more especially for young people of noble birth, were the subjects of conversation during the drive. On approaching their destination the Prince renewed his instructions to his daughter, and repeated over to her several times the prescribed form of reply. On entering this neighborhood, Gertrude felt her heart beat violently; but her attention was suddenly arrested by several gentlemen, who stopped the carriage and addressed numberless compliments to her. Then continuing their way, they drove slowly up to the monastery, amongst the inquisitive gazes of the crowds who had collected upon the road. When the carriage stopped before these well-known walls, and that dreaded door, Gertrude's heart beat still more violently. They alighted between two wings of bystanders, whom the servants were endeavoring to keep back, and the consciousness that the eyes of all were upon her, compelled the unfortunate girl closely to study her behavior; but, above all, those of her father kept her in awe; for, spite of the

श्रीकैलाससागरसूरि ज्ञानमन्दिर
प्रवेश अंक सं.

dread she had of them, she could not help every moment raising her eyes to his, and, like invisible reins, they regulated every movement and expression of her countenance. After traversing the first court, they entered the second, where the door of the interior cloister was held open, and completely blockaded by nuns. In the first row stood the Abbess, surrounded by the eldest of the sisterhood; behind them the younger nuns promiscuously arranged, and some on tiptoe; and, last of all, the lay sisters mounted on stools. Here and there among them were seen the glancing of certain bright eyes and some little faces peeping out from between the cowls: they were the most active and daring of the pupils, who, creeping in and pushing their way between nun and nun, had succeeded in making an opening where *they* might also see something. Many were the acclamations of this crowd, and many the hands held up in token of welcome and exultation. They reached the door, and Gertrude found herself standing before the Lady Abbess. After the first compliments, the superior, with an air between cheerfulness and solemnity, asked her what she wanted in that place, where there was no one who would deny her anything.

"I am here . . ." began Gertrude; but, on the point of pronouncing the words which would almost irrevocably decide her fate, she hesitated a moment, and remained with her eyes fixed on the crowd before her. At this moment she caught the eye of one of her old companions, who looked at her with a mixed air of compassion and malice which seemed to say: ah! the boaster is caught. This sight, awakening more vividly in her mind her old feelings, restored to her also a little of her former courage; and she was on the point of framing a reply far different to the one which had been dictated to her, when, raising her eyes to her father's face, almost, as it were, to try her strength, she encountered there such a deep disquietude, such a threatening impatience, that, urged by fear, she continued with great precipitation, as if flying from some terrible object: "I am here to request permission to take the religious habit in this monastery, where I have been so lovingly educated." The Abbess quickly answered that she was very sorry in this instance that the regulations forbade her giving an immediate reply, which must come from the general votes of the sisters, and for which she must obtain permission from her superiors; that, nevertheless, Gertrude knew well enough the feelings

entertained towards her in that place, to foresee what the answer would be; and that, in the mean while, no regulation prevented the Abbess and the sisterhood from manifesting the great satisfaction they felt in hearing her make such a request. There then burst forth a confused murmur of congratulations and acclamations. Presently, large dishes were brought filled with sweetmeats, and were offered first to the bride, and afterwards to her parents. While some of the nuns approached to greet Gertrude, others complimenting her mother, and others the young Prince, the Abbess requested the Prince to repair to the grate of the parlor of conference, where she would wait upon him. She was accompanied by two elders, and on his appearing, "Signor Prince," said she; "to obey the regulations . . . to perform an indispensable formality, though in this case . . . nevertheless I must tell you . . . that whenever a young person asks to be admitted to take the veil, . . . the superior, which I am unworthily . . . is obliged to warn the parents . . . that if by any chance . . . they should have constrained the will of their daughter, they are liable to excommunication. You will excuse me . . ."

"Oh! certainly, certainly, reverend mother. I admire your exactness; it is only right. . . . But you need not doubt . . ."

"Oh! think Signor Prince . . . I only spoke from absolute duty . . . for the rest . . ."

"Certainly, certainly, Lady Abbess."

Having exchanged these few words, the two interlocutors reciprocally bowed and departed, as if neither of them felt very willing to prolong the interview, each retiring to his own party, the one outside, the other within the threshold of the cloister. "Now then let us go," said the Prince: "Gertrude will soon have plenty of opportunity of enjoying as much as she pleases the society of these good mothers. For the present, we have put them to enough inconvenience." And, making a low bow, he signified his wish to return: the party broke up, exchanged salutations, and departed

During the drive home Gertrude felt little inclination to speak. Alarmed at the step she had taken, ashamed at her want of spirit, and vexed with others as well as herself, she tried to enumerate the opportunities which still remained of saying no, and languidly and confusedly resolved in her own mind that in this, or that, or the other instance she *would* be

more open and courageous. Yet, in the midst of these thoughts, her dread of her father's frown still held its full sway; so that once, when, by a stealthy glance at his face, she was fully assured that not a vestige of anger remained, when she even saw that he was perfectly satisfied with her, she felt quite cheered, and experienced a real but transient joy.

On their arrival, a long toilet, dinner, visits, walks, a *conversazione* and supper, followed each other in rapid succession. After supper the Prince introduced another subject — the choice of a godmother. This was the title of the person who, being solicited by the parents, became the guardian and escort of the young novice, in the interval between the request and the admission; an interval frequently spent in visiting churches, public palaces, *conversazioni*, villas, and temples; in short, everything of note in the city and its environs; so that the young people, before pronouncing the irrevocable vow, might be fully aware of what they were giving up.

"We must think of a godmother," said the Prince; "for to-morrow the vicar of the nuns will be here for the usual formality of an examination, and shortly afterwards Gertrude will be proposed in council for the acceptance of the nuns."

In saying this he turned towards the Princess, and she, thinking he intended it as an invitation to her to make some proposal, was beginning: "There should be . . ." But the Prince interrupted her.

"No, no, Signora Princess; the godmother should be acceptable above all to the bride; and though universal custom gives the selection to the parents, yet Gertrude has so much judgment, and such excellent discernment, that she richly deserves to be made an exception." And here, turning to Gertrude, with the air of one who was bestowing a singular favor, he continued: "Any one of the ladies who were at the *conversazioni* this evening possesses all the necessary qualifications for the office of godmother to a person of your family; and any one of them, I am willing to believe, will think it an honor to be made choice of. Do you choose for yourself."

Gertrude was fully sensible that to make a choice was but to renew her consent; yet the proposition was made with so much dignity that a refusal would have borne the appearance of contempt, and an excuse, of ignorance or fastidiousness. She therefore took this step also, and named a lady who had chiefly taken her fancy that evening; that is to say, one who

form a derogatory judgment of my conduct — a course which I absolutely cannot take in justice to myself — or to reveal the true motive of your resolution, and . . ." But here, observing that Gertrude colored crimson, that her eyes became inflamed, and her face contracted like the petals of a flower in the sultry heat that precedes a storm, he broke off this strain, and continued with a serene face: "Come, come, all depends upon yourself — upon your judgment. I know that you are not deficient in it, and that you are not a child, to go spoil a good undertaking just at the conclusion; but I must foresee and provide for all contingencies. Let us say no more about it; only let me feel assured that you will reply with frankness so as not to excite suspicion in the mind of this worthy man. Thus you, also, will be set at liberty the sooner." Then, after suggesting a few answers to the probable interrogations that would be put, he entered upon the usual topic of the pleasures and enjoyments prepared for Gertrude at the monastery, and contrived to detain her on this subject till a servant announced the arrival of the examiner. After a hasty repetition of the most important hints, he left his daughter alone with him, according to the usual custom.

The good man came with a slight preconceived opinion that Gertrude had a strong desire for a cloistral life, because the Prince had told him so, when he went to request his attendance. It is true that the good priest, who knew well enough that mistrust was one of the most necessary virtues of his office, held as a maxim that he should be very slow in believing such protestations, and should be on his guard against preconceptions; but it seldom happens that the positive affirmations of a person of such authority, in whatever matter, do not give a bias to the mind of those who hear them. After the usual salutations: "Signorina," said he, "I am coming to act the part of the tempter; I have come to excite doubts where your request expresses certainty, to place difficulties before your eyes, and to assure myself whether you have well considered them. Will you allow me to ask you some questions?"

"Proceed," replied Gertrude.

The worthy priest then began to question her in the usual prescribed forms. "Do you feel in your heart a free, voluntary resolution to become a nun? Have no threatenings, no flatteries, been resorted to? Has no authority been made use of to persuade you to this step? Speak without reserve and with

perfect sincerity to a man whose duty it is to ascertain your unbiased will, that he may prevent your being compelled by any exercise of force to take such a course."

The true answer to such a demand rose up before Gertrude's mind with fearful distinctness. But to make that reply, she must come to an explanation; she must disclose what she had been threatened with, and relate a story. . . . The unhappy girl shrank back in horror from such an idea, and tried to find some other reply, which would more speedily release her from this unpleasant interview. "I wish to take the veil," said she, concealing her agitation —"I wish to take the veil at my own desire, voluntarily."

"How long have you had this desire?" again demanded the good priest.

"I have always felt it," replied Gertrude, rendered after this first step more unscrupulous about speaking the truth.

"But what is the principal motive that induces you to become a nun?"

The good priest little knew what a terrible chord he was touching; and Gertrude had to make a great effort not to betray in her countenance the effect which these words produced on her mind, as she replied: "My motive is to serve God, and to fly the perils of the world."

"May there not have been some disgust? Some . . . excuse me . . . some caprice? There are times when a passing cause may make an impression that seems at the moment sure to be lasting; but afterwards, when the cause is removed, and the mind calmed, then . . ."

"No, no," replied Gertrude, precipitately, "the reason is exactly what I have told you."

The vicar, rather to discharge his duty faithfully than because he thought it necessary, persisted in his inquiries; but Gertrude was resolved to deceive him. Besides the horror she felt at the thought of making him acquainted with her weakness, when he seemed so far from suspecting her of anything of the kind, the poor girl thought that though he could certainly easily prevent her taking the veil, yet that there was the end of his authority over her, or his power of protection. When once he had gone, she would be left alone with the Prince, and of what she would then have to endure in that house, the worthy priest could know nothing; or, even if he did, he could only pity her. The examiner was tired of questioning, before the

unfortunate girl of deceiving him; and, finding her replies invariably consistent, and having no reason to doubt their sincerity, he at last changed his tone, and said all he could to confirm her in her good resolution; and, after congratulating her, he took his leave. Passing through one of the apartments, he met with the Prince, who appeared to fall in with him accidentally, and congratulated him on the good dispositions his daughter had displayed. The Prince had been waiting in a very wearisome state of suspense, but, on receiving this account, he breathed more freely, and, forgetting his usual gravity, he almost ran to Gertrude, and loaded her with commendations, caresses, and promises, with cordial satisfaction, and a tenderness of manner to a great degree sincere. Such a strange medley is the human heart!

We will not follow Gertrude in her continual round of sights and amusements, nor will we describe, either generally or particularly, the feelings of her mind during this period; it would be a history of sorrows and fluctuations too monotonous, and too much resembling what we have already related. The beauty of the surrounding seats, the continual variety of objects, and the pleasant excursions in the open air rendered the idea of the place where she must shortly alight for the last time, more odious to her than ever. Still more painful were the impressions made upon her by the assemblies and amusements of the city. The sight of a bride, in the more obvious and common sense of the word, aroused in her envy and anguish, to a degree almost intolerable; and sometimes the sight of some other individual made her feel as if to hear that title given to herself would be the height of felicity. There were even times when the pomp of palaces, the splendor of ornaments, and the excitement and clamorous festivity of the *conversazione* so infatuated her, and aroused in her such an ardent desire to lead a gay life, that she resolved to recant, and to suffer anything rather than turn to the cold and deathlike shade of the cloister. But all these resolutions vanished into air, on the calmer consideration of the difficulties of such a course, or on merely raising her eyes to the Prince's face. Sometimes, too, the thought that she must forever abandon these enjoyments made even this little taste of them bitter and wearisome to her; as the patient, suffering with thirst, eyes with vexation, and almost refuses with contempt, the spoonful of water the physician unwillingly allows him. In the mean while, the vicar of the nuns had dispatched

the necessary attestation, and permission arrived, to hold the conference for the election of Gertrude. The meeting was called two thirds of the secret votes, which were required by the regulations, were given, as was to be expected, and Gertrude was accepted. She herself, wearied with this long struggle, begged for immediate admission into the monastery, and no one came forward to oppose such a request. She was therefore gratified in her wish; and, after being pompously conducted to the monastery, she assumed the habit. After twelve months of novitiate, full of alternate regret and repentings, the time of public profession arrived; that is to say, the time when she must either utter a "no," more strange, more unexpected, and more disgraceful than ever; or pronounce a "yes," already so often repeated: she pronounced it, and became a nun forever.



HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP.

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward, unto souls afar,
Along the psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if there any is
For gift or grace, surpassing this,—
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart, to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep,
The patriot's voice, to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown, to light the brows?—
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith, all undisproved,
A little dust, to overweep,
And bitter memories, to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake.
"He giveth His beloved sleep"

"Sleep soft, beloved!" we sometimes say,
But have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dream again



ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Shall break the happy slumber, when
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O man, with wailing in your voices!
O delvèd gold, the wailers' heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And "giveth His beloved sleep."

His dews drop mutely on the hill,
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap.
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

Yea! men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man,
Confirmed, in such a rest to keep;
But angels say — and through the word
I ween their blessed smile is *heard* —
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the jugglers leap,—
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on *His* love repose,
Who "giveth His beloved sleep!"

And, friends, dear friends, — when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let one, most loving of you all,
Say, "Not a tear must o'er her fall —
'He giveth His beloved sleep.'"



FRIENDSHIP.

By RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

[Ralph Waldo Emerson, the eminent American poet, essayist, and lecturer, was born in Boston, May 25, 1803. He came of a long line of ministers; and after graduating from Harvard, taught for a few years, and in 1829 was ordained pastor of the Second Unitarian Church. This office, however, he

resigned in 1832, on account of the gradually increasing differences between his own modes of thought and those of his hearers. He then made a brief trip to Europe, during which he became acquainted with Carlyle, and on his return commenced his career as lecturer, meeting with continued success in the United States and England. In 1840, on the establishment of the *Dial*, the organ of the Transcendentalists, he became a contributor, and from 1842 to 1844 its editor. He died at his home in Concord, Mass., April 27, 1882. His collected works include "Nature," "Essays" (two series), "Representative Men," "English Traits," "Society and Solitude," "Letters and Social Aims," "Poems."]

We have a great deal more kindness than is ever spoken. Mauger all the selfishness that chills like east winds the world, the whole human family is bathed with an element of love like a fine ether. How many persons we meet in houses, whom we scarcely speak to, whom yet we honor, and who honor us! How many we see in the street, or sit with in church, whom, though silently, we warmly rejoice to be with! Read the language of these wandering eyebeams. The heart knoweth.

The effect of the indulgence of this human affection is a certain cordial exhilaration. In poetry and in common speech the emotions of benevolence and complacency which are felt towards others are likened to the material effects of fire; so swift, or much more swift, more active, more cheering, are these fine inward irradiations. From the highest degree of passionate love to the lowest degree of good will, they make the sweetness of life.

Our intellectual and active powers increase with our affection. The scholar sits down to write, and all his years of meditation do not furnish him with one good thought or happy expression; but it is necessary to write a letter to a friend,— and forthwith troops of gentle thoughts invest themselves, on every hand, with chosen words. See, in any house where virtue and self-respect abide, the palpitation which the approach of a stranger causes. A commended stranger is expected and announced, and an uneasiness betwixt pleasure and pain invades all the hearts of a household. His arrival almost brings fear to the good hearts that would welcome him. The house is dusted, all things fly into their places, the old coat is exchanged for the new, and they must get up a dinner if they can. Of a commended stranger, only the good report is told by others, only the good and new is heard by us. He stands to us for humanity. He is what we wish. Having imagined and invested him, we ask how we should stand related in conversation and action with such a man, and are

uneasy with fear. The same idea exalts conversation with him. We talk better than we are wont. We have the nimblest fancy, a richer memory, and our dumb devil has taken leave for the time. For long hours we can continue a series of sincere, graceful, rich communications, drawn from the oldest, secretest experience, so that they who sit by, of our own kinsfolk and acquaintance, shall feel a lively surprise at our unusual powers. But as soon as the stranger begins to intrude his partialities, his definitions, his defects into the conversation, it is all over. He has heard the first, the last, and best he will ever hear from us. He is no stranger now. Vulgarity, ignorance, misapprehension, are old acquaintances. Now, when he comes, he may get the order, the dress, and the dinner,—but the throbbing of the heart and the communications of the soul, no more.

Pleasant are these jets of affection which make a young world for me again. Delicious is a just and firm encounter of two, in a thought, in a feeling. How beautiful, on their approach to this beating heart, the steps and forms of the gifted and the true! The moment we indulge our affections, the earth is metamorphosed: there is no winter and no night: all tragedies, all ennuis vanish,—all duties even; nothing fills the proceeding eternity but the forms all radiant of beloved persons. Let the soul be assured that somewhere in the universe it should rejoin its friend, and it would be content and cheerful alone for a thousand years.

I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new. Shall I not call God the Beautiful, who daily showeth himself so to me in his gifts? I chide society, I embrace solitude, and yet I am not so ungrateful as not to see the wise, the lovely, and the noble-minded, as from time to time they pass my gate. Who hears me, who understands me, becomes mine,—a possession for all time. Nor is nature so poor but she gives me this joy several times, and thus we weave social threads of our own, a new web of relations; and, as many thoughts in succession substantiate themselves, we shall by and by stand in a new world of our own creation, and no longer strangers and pilgrims in a traditionary globe. My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me. By oldest right, by the divine affinity of virtue with itself, I find them, or rather not I but the Deity in me and in them both deride and cancel the thick walls of individual

character, relation, age, sex, circumstance, at which he usually connives, and now makes many one. High thanks I owe you, excellent lovers, who carry out the world for me to new and noble depths, and enlarge the meaning of all my thoughts. These are not stark and stiffened persons, but the newborn poetry of God, — poetry without stop, — hymn, ode, and epic, poetry still flowing and not yet caked in dead books with annotation and grammar, but Apollo and the Muses chanting still. Will these two separate themselves from me again, or some of them? I know not, but I fear it not; for my relation to them is so pure that we hold by simple affinity, and the Genius of my life being thus social, the same affinity will exert its energy on whomsoever is as noble as these men and women, wherever I may be.

I confess to an extreme tenderness of nature on this point. It is almost dangerous to me to "crush the sweet poison of misused wine" of the affections. A new person is to me always a great event and hinders me from sleep. I have had such fine fancies lately about two or three persons which have given me delicious hours; but the joy ends in the day; it yields no fruit. Thought is not born of it; my action is very little modified. I must feel pride in my friend's accomplishments as if they were mine, — wild, delicate, throbbing property in his virtues. I feel as warmly when he is praised, as the lover when he hears applause of his engaged maiden. We overestimate the conscience of our friend. His goodness seems better than our goodness, his nature finer, his temptations less. Everything that is his, his name, his form, his dress, books, and instruments, fancy enhances. Our own thought sounds new and larger from his mouth.

Yet the systole and diastole of the heart are not without their analogy in the ebb and flow of love. Friendship, like the immortality of the soul, is too good to be believed. The lover, beholding his maiden, half knows that she is not verily that which he worships; and in the golden hour of friendship we are surprised with shades of suspicion and unbelief. We doubt that we bestow on our hero the virtues in which he shines, and afterwards worship the form to which we have ascribed this divine inhabitation. In strictness, the soul does not respect man as it respects itself. In strict science all persons underlie the same condition of an infinite remoteness. Shall we fear to cool our love by facing the fact, by mining

for the metaphysical foundation of this Elysian temple? Shall I not be as real as the things I see? If I am, I shall not fear to know them for what they are. Their essence is not less beautiful than their appearance, though it needs finer organs for its apprehension. The root of the plant is not unsightly to science, though for chaplets and festoons we cut the stem short. And I must hazard the production of the bald fact amidst these pleasing reveries, though it should prove an Egyptian skull at our banquet. A man who stands united with his thought conceives magnificently of himself. He is conscious of a universal success, even though bought by uniform particular failures. No advantages, no powers, no gold or force, can be any match for him. I cannot choose but rely on my own poverty more than on your wealth. I cannot make your consciousness tantamount to mine. Only the star dazzles; the planet has a faint, moonlike ray. I hear what you say of the admirable parts and tried temper of the party you praise, but I see well that, for all his purple cloaks, I shall not like him, unless he is at last a poor Greek like me. I cannot deny it, O friend, that the vast shadow of the Phenomenal includes thee also in its pied and painted immensity,—thee also, compared with whom all else is shadow. Thou art not Being, as Truth is, as Justice is,—thou art not my soul, but a picture and effigy of that. Thou hast come to me lately, and already thou art seizing thy hat and cloak. Is it not that the soul puts forth friends as the tree puts forth leaves, and presently, by the germination of new buds, extrudes the old leaf? The law of nature is alternation for evermore. Each electrical state superinduces the opposite. The soul environs itself with friends that it may enter into a grander self-acquaintance or solitude; and it goes alone for a season that it may exalt its conversation or society. This method betrays itself along the whole history of our personal relations, the instinct of affection revives the hope of union with our mates, and the returning sense of insulation recalls us from the chase. Thus every man passes his life in the search after friendship, and if he should record his true sentiment, he might write a letter like this to each new candidate for his love.

Dear Friend,—If I was sure of thee, sure of thy capacity, sure to match my mood with thine, I should never think again of trifles in relation to thy comings and goings. I am not very wise·

my moods are quite attainable · and I respect thy genius . it is to me as yet unfathomed; yet dare I not presume in thee a perfect intelligence of me, and so thou art to me a delicious torment. Thine ever, or never.

Yet these uneasy pleasures and fine pains are for curiosity and not for life. They are not to be indulged. This is to weave cobweb, and not cloth. Our friendships hurry to short and poor conclusions, because we have made them a texture of wine and dreams, instead of the tough fiber of the human heart. The laws of friendship are great, austere, and eternal, of one web with the laws of nature and of morals. But we have aimed at a swift and petty benefit, to suck a sudden sweetness. We snatch at the slowest fruit in the whole garden of God, which many summers and many winters must ripen. We seek our friend not sacredly, but with an adulterate passion which would appropriate him to ourselves. In vain. We are armed all over with subtle antagonisms, which, as soon as we meet, begin to play, and translate all poetry into stale prose. Almost all people descend to meet. All association must be a compromise, and, what is worst, the very flower and aroma of the flower of each of the beautiful natures disappears as they approach each other. What a perpetual disappointment is actual society, even of the virtuous and gifted! After interviews have been compassed with long foresight we must be tormented presently by baffled blows, by sudden, unseasonable apathies, by epilepsies of wit and of animal spirits, in the heyday of friendship and thought. Our faculties do not play us true, and both parties are relieved by solitude.

I ought to be equal to every relation. It makes no difference how many friends I have and what content I can find in conversing with each, if there be one to whom I am not equal. If I have shrunk unequal from one contest, instantly the joy I find in all the rest becomes mean and cowardly. I should hate myself, if then I made my other friends my asylum.

The valiant warrior famoused for fight,
After a hundred victories, once foiled,
Is from the book of honor razed quite
And all the rest forgot for which he toiled

Our impatience is thus sharply rebuked. Bashfulness and apathy are a tough husk in which a delicate organization is pro-

tected from premature ripening. It would be lost if it knew itself before any of the best souls were yet ripe enough to know and own it. Respect the *naturlangsamkeit* which hardens the ruby in a million years, and works in duration in which Alps and Andes come and go as rainbows. The good spirit of our life has no heaven which is the price of rashness. Love, which is the essence of God, is not for levity, but for the total worth of man. Let us not have this childish luxury in our regards; but the austerest worth; let us approach our friend with an audacious trust in the truth of his heart, in the breadth, impossible to be overturned, of his foundations.

The attractions of this subject are not to be resisted, and I leave, for the time, all account of subordinate social benefit, to speak of that select and sacred relation which is a kind of absolute, and which even leaves the language of love suspicious and common, so much is this purer, and nothing is so much divine.

I do not wish to treat friendships daintily, but with roughest courage. When they are real, they are not glass threads or frostwork, but the solidest thing we know. For now, after so many ages of experience, what do we know of nature or of ourselves? Not one step has man taken toward the solution of the problem of his destiny. In one condemnation of folly stand the whole universe of men. But the sweet sincerity of joy and peace which I draw from this alliance with my brother's soul is the nut itself whereof all nature and all thought is but the husk and shell. Happy is the house that shelters a friend! It might well be built, like a festal bower or arch, to entertain him a single day. Happier, if he know the solemnity of that relation and honor its law! It is no idle bond, no holiday engagement. He who offers himself a candidate for that covenant comes up, like an Olympian, to the great games where the firstborn of the world are the competitors. He proposes himself for contests where Time, Want, Danger, are in the lists, and he alone is victor who has truth enough in his constitution to preserve the delicacy of his beauty from the wear and tear of all these. The gifts of fortune may be present or absent, but all the hap in that contest depends on intrinsic nobleness and the contempt of trifles. There are two elements that go to the composition of friendship, each so sovereign that I can detect no superiority in either, no reason why either should be first named One is Truth. A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere.

by hope, by lucre, by lust, by hate, by admiration, by every circumstance and badge and trifle, but we can scarce believe that so much character can subsist in another as to draw us by love. Can another be so blessed and we so pure that we can offer him tenderness? When a man becomes dear to me I have touched the goal of fortune. I find very little written directly to the heart of this matter in books. And yet I have one text which I cannot choose but remember. My author says, "I offer myself faintly and bluntly to those whose I effectually am, and tender myself least to him to whom I am the most devoted." I wish that friendship should have feet, as well as eyes and eloquence. It must plant itself on the ground, before it walks over the moon. I wish it to be a little of a citizen, before it is quite a cherub. We chide the citizen because he makes love a commodity. It is an exchange of gifts, of useful loans; it is good neighborhood; it watches with the sick; it holds the pall at the funeral; and quite loses sight of the delicacies and nobility of the relation. But though we cannot find the god under this disguise of a sutler, yet on the other hand we cannot forgive the poet if he spins his thread too fine and does not substantiate his romance by the municipal virtues of justice, punctuality, fidelity, and pity. I hate the prostitution of the name of friendship to signify modish and worldly alliances. I much prefer the company of plowboys and tin peddlers, to the silken and perfumed amity which only celebrates its days of encounter by a frivolous display, by rides in a curricle, and dinners at the best taverns. The end of friendship is a commerce the most strict and homely that can be joined; more strict than any of which we have experience. It is for aid and comfort through all the relations and passages of life and death. It is fit for serene days and graceful gifts and country rambles, but also for rough roads and hard fare, shipwreck, poverty, and persecution. It keeps company with the sallies of the wit and the trances of religion. We are to dignify to each other the daily needs and offices of man's life, and embellish it by courage, wisdom, and unity. It should never fall into something usual and settled, but should be alert and inventive and add rhyme and reason to what was drudgery.

For perfect friendship may be said to require natures so rare and costly, so well tempered each and so happily adapted, and withal so circumstanced (for even in that particular, a poet says, love demands that the parties be altogether paired), that

very seldom can its satisfaction be realized. It cannot subsist in its perfection, say some of those who are learned in this warm lore of the heart, betwixt more than two. I am not quite so strict in my terms, perhaps because I have never known so high a fellowship as others. I please my imagination more with a circle of godlike men and women variously related to each other and between whom subsists a lofty intelligence. But I find this law of *one to one* peremptory for conversation, which is the practice and consummation of friendship. Do not mix waters too much. The best mix as ill as good and bad. You shall have very useful and cheering discourse at several times with two several men, but let all three of you come together and you shall not have one new and hearty word. Two may talk and one may hear, but three cannot take part in a conversation of the most sincere and searching sort. In good company there is never such discourse between two, across the table, as takes place when you leave them alone. In good company the individuals at once merge their egotism into a social soul exactly coextensive with the several consciousnesses there present. No partialities of friend to friend, no fondnesses of brother to sister, of wife to husband, are there pertinent, but quite otherwise. Only he may then speak who can sail on the common thought of the party, and not poorly limited to his own. Now this convention, which good sense demands, destroys the high freedom of great conversation, which requires an absolute running of two souls into one.

No two men but being left alone with each other enter into simpler relations. Yet it is affinity that determines *which* two shall converse. Unrelated men give little joy to each other; will never suspect the latent powers of each. We talk sometimes of a great talent for conversation, as if it were a permanent property in some individuals. Conversation is an evanescent relation,—no more. A man is reputed to have thought and eloquence; he cannot, for all that, say a word to his cousin or his uncle. They accuse his silence with as much reason as they would blame the insignificance of a dial in the shade. In the sun it will mark the hour. Among those who enjoy his thought he will regain his tongue.

Friendship requires that rare mean betwixt likeness and unlikeness that piques each with the presence of power and of consent in the other party. Let me be alone to the end of the world, rather than that my friend should overstep, by a word

or a look, his real sympathy. I am equally balked by antagonism and by compliance. Let him not cease an instant to be himself. The only joy I have in his being mine is that the *not mine* is *mine*. It turns the stomach, it blots the daylight; where I looked for a manly furtherance or at least a manly resistance, to find a mush of concession. Better be a nettle in the side of your friend than his echo. The condition which high friendship demands is ability to do without it. To be capable that high office requires great and sublime parts. There must be very two, before there can be very one. Let it be an alliance of two large, formidable natures, mutually beheld, mutually feared, before yet they recognize the deep identity which, beneath these disparities, unites them.

He only is fit for this society who is magnanimous. He must be so to know its law. He must be one who is sure that greatness and goodness are always economy. He must be one who is not swift to intermeddle with his fortunes. Let him not dare to intermeddle with this. Leave to the diamond its ages to grow, nor expect to accelerate the births of the eternal. Friendship demands a religious treatment. We must not be willful, we must not provide. We talk of choosing our friends, but friends are self-elected. Reverence is a great part of it. Treat your friend as a spectacle. Of course if he be a man he has merits that are not yours, and that you cannot honor if you must needs hold him close to your person. Stand aside. Give those merits room. Let them mount and expand. Be not so much his friend that you can never know his peculiar energies, like fond mammas who shut up their boy in the house until he is almost grown a girl. Are you the friend of your friend's buttons, or of his thought? To a great heart he will still be a stranger in a thousand particulars, that he may come near in the holiest ground. Leave it to girls and boys to regard a friend as property, and to suck a short and all-confounding pleasure, instead of the pure nectar of God.

Let us buy our entrance to this guild by a long probation. Why should we desecrate noble and beautiful souls by intruding on them? Why insist on rash personal relations with your friend? Why go to his house, or know his mother and brother and sisters? Why be visited by him at your own? Are these things material to our covenant? Leave this touching and clawing. Let him be to me a spirit. A message, a thought, a sincerity, a glance from him, I want, but not news, nor pottage. I

can get politics and chat and neighborly conveniences from cheaper companions. Should not the society of my friend be to me poetic, pure, universal, and great as nature itself? Ought I to feel that our tie is profane in comparison with yonder bar of cloud that sleeps on the horizon, or that clump of waving grass that divides the brook? Let us not vilify, but raise it to that standard. That great defying eye, that scornful beauty of his mien and action, do not pique yourself on reducing, but rather fortify and enhance. Worship his superiorities. Wish him not less by a thought, but hoard and tell them all. Guard him as thy great counterpart; have a princedom to thy friend. Let him be to thee forever a sort of beautiful enemy, untamable, devoutly revered, and not a trivial conveniency to be soon outgrown and cast aside. The hues of the opal, the light of the diamond, are not to be seen if the eye is too near. To my friend I write a letter and from him I receive a letter. That seems to you a little. Me it suffices. It is a spiritual gift, worthy of him to give and of me to receive. It profanes nobody. In these warm lines the heart will trust itself, as it will not to the tongue, and pour out the prophecy of a godlier existence than all the annals of heroism have yet made good.

Respect so far the holy laws of this fellowship as not to prejudice its perfect flower by your impatience for its opening. We must be our own before we can be another's. There is at least this satisfaction in crime, according to the Latin proverb: you can speak to your accomplice on even terms. *Crimen quos inquinat, æquat.* To those whom we admire and love, at first we cannot. Yet the least defect of self-possession vitiates, in my judgment, the entire relation. There can never be deep peace between two spirits, never mutual respect, until in their dialogue each stands for the whole world.

What is so great as friendship, let us carry with what grandeur of spirit we can. Let us be silent,—so we may hear the whisper of the gods. Let us not interfere. Who set you to cast about what you should say to the select souls, or to say anything to such? No matter how ingenious, no matter how graceful and bland. There are innumerable degrees of folly and wisdom, and for you to say aught is to be frivolous. Wait, and thy soul shall speak. Wait until the necessary and everlasting overpowers you, until day and night avail themselves of your lips. The only money of God is God. He pays never with anything less, or anything else. The only reward of virtue is

virtue: the only way to have a friend is to be one. You shall not come nearer a man by getting into his house. If unlike, his soul only flees the faster from you, and you shall catch never a true glance of his eye. We see the noble afar off and they repel us; why should we intrude? Late, — very late, — we perceive that no arrangements, no introductions, no consuetudes or habits of society would be of any avail to establish us in such relations with them as we desire, — but solely the uprise of nature in us to the same degree it is in them: then shall we meet as water with water: and if we should not meet them then, we shall not want them, for we are already they. In the last analysis, love is only the reflection of a man's own worthiness from other men. Men have sometimes exchanged names with their friends, as if they would signify that in their friend each loved his own soul.

The higher the style we demand of friendship, of course the less easy to establish it with flesh and blood. We walk alone in the world. Friends such as we desire are dreams and fables. But a sublime hope cheers ever the faithful heart, that elsewhere, in other regions of the universal power, souls are now acting, enduring, and daring, which can love us and which we can love. We may congratulate ourselves that the period of nonage, of follies, of blunders, and of shame is passed in solitude, and when we are finished men we shall grasp heroic hands in heroic hands. Only be admonished by what you already see, not to strike leagues of friendship with cheap persons, where no friendship can be. Our impatience betrays us into rash and foolish alliances which no God attends. By persisting in your path, though you forfeit the little you gain the great. You become pronounced. You demonstrate yourself, so as to put yourself out of the reach of false relations, and you draw to you the firstborn of the world, — those rare pilgrims whereof only one or two wander in nature at once, and before whom the vulgar great show as specters and shadows merely.

It is foolish to be afraid of making our ties too spiritual, as if so we could lose any genuine love. Whatever correction of our popular views we make from insight, nature will be sure to bear us out in, and though it seem to rob us of some joy, will repay us with a greater. Let us feel if we will the absolute insulation of man. We are sure that we have all in us. We go to Europe, or we pursue persons, or we read books, in the instinctive faith that these will call it out and reveal

us to ourselves. Beggars all. The persons are such as we; the Europe, an old faded garment of dead persons; the books, their ghosts. Let us drop this idolatry. Let us give over this mendicancy. Let us even bid our dearest friends farewell, and defy them, saying, "Who are you? Unhand me: I will be dependent no more." Ah! seest thou not, O brother, that thus we part only to meet again on a higher platform, and only be more each other's because we are more our own? A friend is Janus-faced: he looks to the past and the future. He is the child of all my foregoing hours, the prophet of those to come. He is the harbinger of a greater friend. It is the property of the divine to be reproductive.

I do then with my friends as I do with my books. I would have them where I can find them, but I seldom use them. We must have society on our own terms, and admit or exclude it on the slightest cause. I cannot afford to speak much with my friend. If he is great he makes me so great that I cannot descend to converse. In the great days, presentiments hover before me, far before me, in the firmament. I ought then to dedicate myself to them. I go in that I may seize them, I go out that I may seize them. I fear only that I may lose them receding into the sky in which now they are only a patch of brighter light. Then, though I prize my friends, I cannot afford to talk with them and study their visions, lest I lose my own. It would indeed give me a certain household joy to quit this lofty seeking, this spiritual astronomy or search of stars, and come down to warm sympathies with you; but then I know well I shall mourn always the vanishing of my mighty gods. It is true, next week I shall have languid times, when I can well afford to occupy myself with foreign objects; then I shall regret the lost literature of your mind, and wish you were by my side again. But if you come, perhaps you will fill my mind only with new visions; not with yourself but with your lusters, and I shall not be able any more than now to converse with you. So I will owe to my friends this evanescent intercourse. I will receive from them not what they have but what they are. They shall give me that which properly they cannot give me, but which emanates from them. But they shall not hold me by any relations less subtle and pure. We will meet as though we met not, and part as though we parted not.

It has seemed to me lately more possible than I knew, to carry a friendship greatly on one side, without due corre-

spondence on the other. Why should I cumber myself with the poor fact that the receiver is not capacious? It never troubles the sun that some of his rays fall wide and vain into ungrateful space, and only a small part on the reflecting planet. Let your greatness educate the crude and cold companion. If he is unequal he will presently pass away; but thou art enlarged by thy own shining, and, no longer a mate for frogs and worms, dost soar and burn with the gods of the empyrean. It is thought a disgrace to love unrequited. But the great will see that true love cannot be unrequited. True love transcends instantly the unworthy object and dwells and broods on the eternal, and when the poor interposed mask crumbles, it is not sad, but feels rid of so much earth and feels its independency the surer. Yet these things may hardly be said without a sort of treachery to the relation. The essence of friendship is entireness, a total magnanimity and trust. It must not surmise or provide for infirmity. It treats its object as a god, that it may deify both.



THE COURTIN'.

By JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Zekle crep' up, quite unbeknown,
  An' peeked in thru the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
  'ith no one nigh to hender.

Agin' the chimbly crooknecks hung,
  An' in amongst 'em rusted
The old queen's arm thet Gran'ther Young
  Fetched back frum Concord busted.

The wannut logs shot sparkles out
  Towards the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle fires danced all about
  The chiny on the dresser

The very room, coz she wuz in,
  Looked warm frum floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
  Ez th' apples she wuz peelin'.

She heerd a foot an' knowed it, tu,
  A raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelins flew
  Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
  Some doubtfle o' the seekle;
His heart kep' goin' pitypat,
  But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yet she gin her cheer a jerk
  Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work
  Ez ef a wager spurred her.

"You want to see my Pa, I spose?"
  "Wal, no; I come designin'—"
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
  Agin to-morrow's i'nin'."

He stood a spell on one foot fust
  Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
  He couldn't ha' told ye, nuther.

Sez he, "I'd better call agin;"
  Sez she, "Think likely, *Mister;*"
The last word pricked him like a pin,
  An'—wal, he up and kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
  Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kind o' smily round the lips
  An' teary round the lashes

Her blood riz quick, though, like the tide
  Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they wuz cried
  In meetin', come nex' Sunday.

ON THE WANE: A SENTIMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE.[1]

By Mrs. W. K Clifford.

(From "Love Letters of a Worldly Woman.")

[Lucy Lane of Barbadoes married Prof. W. K. Clifford in 1875. She has written also, "Mrs Keith's Crime" (1885), "Aunt Anne" (1892), "A Flash of Summer" (1895), besides stories for children]

I.

He.

St. James Street, W.,
Monday, June 23d.

My Dear and Precious One,—This is only a line to tell you that I shall come and dine with you and your mummy this evening, at the usual time. I have been thinking, my sweet, that we had much better be married soon. What is the good of waiting—beyond the winter anyway? We must make arrangements for the mummy, or why could she not come to us? I shall talk to you seriously about it to-night, so be prepared. I feel as if we can't go on living at different ends of London much longer; besides, what is the good of waiting?

No more time, dear, for I must post this at once. You had my long letter this morning. Yours was just like you. I think you are the greatest darling on earth, Gwen,—I have taken it very badly, you see,—and I have got something for you when I come that I think you will like. Till then be good and love me. Meet me down the lane if you can, like an angel—no, like yourself, which will be better.

Your devoted
Jim.

II.

He.

Tuesday Night, June 24th.

You were so very sweet last night, beloved; I do nothing but think of you. I do trust you, darling, absolutely; and if we must wait till Christmas, why, we must. But you will come to me then, won't you? and we will be the two happiest people on earth. I can't rest till I have seen you again. I have been thinking that if you met me to-morrow at four at the Finchley Road Station we could have a long walk, and drive back in a hansom in the cool of the evening in time for dinner. Shall

[1] By permission of the Author and Mr. Edward Arnold (Cr. 8vo Price 3s 6d)

we? If so, come in your big hat and the white dress, for that is how you look prettiest, you gypsy.

Your devoted

JIM.

III.

SHE.

HAMPSTEAD,
Wednesday Morning, June 25th.

Only to say of course I will, darling. I will do anything you like. You looked so handsome last night that I was "shocking" proud of you, as you would say. Mother says the sound of you in the house makes the whole place joyful. It does. I shall love a long walk — dear you, to think of it. I'll be there in the big hat and the white dress, according to the orders of His Majesty the King.

His very loving

GWEN

IV.

HE.

(A MONTH LATER.)

Wednesday, July 25th.

DEAREST CHILD, — Sorry I could not come yesterday afternoon; it's an awful pull up that hill, and the day was so blazing hot that I confess I shirked it. You understand, don't you, darling? I'll come and dine on Friday anyway. My mother says you must go and stay with her this autumn. She is enjoying her month in town, I think. Good-by, my child, no more time. I'm awfully vexed now I didn't charter a hansom yesterday to go up that blessed hill on the top of which it pleases you to live, or climb it on all fours, for I want to see you badly. I have been very busy, and naturally, while my mother is here, I have less time than usual.

Your loving

JIM.

V.

SHE

Wednesday Night.

Yes, old darling. I quite understand, and I'll count the hours till Friday. Of course I was disappointed yesterday, but I tried to console myself by thinking that you might have got sunstroke if you had come; and then in the evening, when I

felt very downhearted, I read over a heap of your letters—I mean those you sent me in the winter, when you first loved me. They were so very loving that they made me quite happy again. Am I just the same to you? I don't know why I ask it; something makes me do so. Do you remember that night we walked up and down the garden till nearly twelve o'clock and talked of all manner of serious things? I often think of it. You said that when we were together we would work and read and try to understand the meaning of many things that seemed like lesson books in the wide world's school, and that now, in the holiday time, we did not want to think about. The lesson time would surely come, you said, so that we need not grudge ourselves our laughter and our joy. I remember that you said, too, that work was the most important thing in life, and I have been wondering if that is so. It seems rather a cold gospel. But perhaps you are right. Your love, for instance, will only make my happiness; but your work may help the whole world. Is that what you meant, darling? All this because of that happy night when you took my face between your hands and looked at me almost solemnly and said, "This dear face is my life's history, thank God for that." I love you so—oh, so much when I think of your voice—but I love you always.

GWEN.

VI.

HE.

Thursday Morning.

YOU DEAR SWEET,—You are a most serious person, and a darling and a goose, and I long to kiss you; but look here, Gwennie, I can't come Friday either. Marsden insists on having half a dozen men to dine with him at the Club, and there must I be in the midst of them. Will Saturday do? Nice day Saturday, comes before Sunday, you know: best preparation in the world for it (seeing that I shall be made to go to church next morning and stay till the end of the sermon), will be seeing you the night before. I think I shall have to take a run to Clifton for a little bit next week, if so I shall miss your garden party, I fear; but we'll talk about this on Saturday.

Yours ever and ever as you know, JIM.

Work? Of course we must work. It is one's rent in the world, and honest folk must pay their way. Your work is to love me.

VII.

SHE.

Thursday Night.

Yes, Jim dear, and I will always do it. Come on Saturday. I shall be miserable if you are not at our garden party, and fear I shall hardly have heart to go on with it. I am a selfish thing; but as you say will talk of it on Saturday.

Your loving GWEN.

VIII.

HE.

(A TELEGRAM.)

Saturday, 7:30 P.M.

Awfully sorry. Relations turned up. Insist on my dining. Will come Monday.

JIM.

IX.

SHE.

Sunday, July 29th.

Of course it could not be helped, dearest, yet when your telegram came I sat down and wept as devoutly as if I had been by the waters of Babylon. Relations are *exigeants*, I know, and you were quite right to go to them, yet I did so long for you; our little feast was ready, and I was ready; in the blue dress that you said I looked pretty in. I had pinned a rose on my shoulder, and wondered if you would pull it leaf by leaf away, —you did last time, do you remember? I shuddered while I thought of it. It was like—but I will not even write it. Oh, Jim dear, how well we can sometimes make ourselves shiver at the impossibilities! I know you love me, but the little things that have kept you away from me oftener than usual lately make me foolish and nervous; they are like thongs that threaten to become a whip, and would if you stayed away too long. But you won't? You know that I love you, as you do me, and that I am weaker and cannot bear the days apart as you can, you who have many things to fill your life, while I have only you to fill mine—only you, for whom I would die, and think death sweet if it did you even the least little good.

When I was ready last night I went out and walked up and down under the veranda, before the windows. I looked in at the drawing room and thought of how we would sit there on the little low sofa after dinner, watching the shadows that

always seem to come stealing through the fir trees; and of how we would talk, as we always do, or of the days when we wondered and guessed about each other, and were afraid and hoped; or of how we would plan our future life and arrange the things we would some day do together. The dining-room window was open, and I looked in there, too, at our table spread, at the great roses in the bowl, and the candles ready for lighting. I thought of how you would sit at the head, as though you were master already, and of how, when we had nearly come to an end, dear mother would rise, as she always does, and say, "You will not mind if I go, dears? I am very tired;" and you would open the door and she would pass out, giving you a little smile as she went; and then you would come back and stoop and kiss me and say, "My darling," just as you always do, and each time seems like a first time. But you did not come, and did not come — and then there was a telegram. I know the quick, loud sound, the clangingness that only the telegraph boy puts into the bell, as well as I know your footstep. Sometimes my heart bounds to it; it leaps to heaven for a moment, for it means that you are coming; and sometimes it sinks. Oh, my darling, if you only knew how it almost stands still sometimes! — it did last night — for it means that you are not coming.

Jim, dear, I am a fool. I know you could not help it. But I love you dearly, and will all my life. I kiss the paper because your hands will touch it. Good night, my own.

GWEN.

X.

HE.

Monday Morning.

YOU SWEET THING, — Your letter almost makes me ashamed of myself. You do love me, Gwen, and I am not half good enough for you. I wonder how I dared go in for a girl like you, or what I ever did to please God that He should give me a love like yours. I often think that you will be awfully disappointed when you get me every day of your life and find out what a commonplace beggar I am. You are certain to find that out anyhow. And yet, why should you? Does not Browning say: —

God be thanked, the meanest of His creatures,
Boasts two soul sides, one to face the world with,
One to show a woman when he loves her.

I don't suppose that I am the meanest of His creatures, but I am not as good as you, dear. There is a sort of looking-aheadness towards Heaven in you that is wholly lacking in me. I have felt that very keenly lately, and wondered whether any vanity would let me stand being made the subject of your being disillusioned about mankind later on. There is one thing certain: whatever happens to us in the future, we have the memory of good love behind us; for I have loved you, Gwen dear; always remember that.

I will come up this evening, and we will have a happy time together. I think I must go to Clifton, after all. Mrs. Seafield wants me to help them through with Tommy's coming of age. Awfully nice woman, Mrs. Seafield, and one ought to encourage nice people by doing what they wish occasionally. Be good. Don't get low-spirited or entertain ghosts unawares, or do anything but love me till I come, and then I will tell you that I love you, which will be better than saying it here.

I think you ought to go away for a bit; you strike me, from your letters, as being a little strained and run down. It's all my fault, isn't it, dearest? For I prevented you from going to Italy last winter by making you be engaged to me; and then we didn't want to put the big distance between us. Till to-night.

Your loving JIM.

XI.

HE.

(A TELEGRAM.)

Clifton, August 3d.

No time to write. Garden party, etc., Friday. Letter to-morrow. Staying till Wednesday. JIM.

XII.

SHE.

Tuesday, August 7th.

DEAREST JIM,—I have been hoping and hoping to hear from you. Is anything the matter, darling? Are you ill? Has a letter miscarried? Are you angry with me? I cannot believe that four whole days have passed without a word, and yet I know that I am foolish to worry myself, for this silence is probably due to some trivial accident. But you are all the

wide world to me — you and my mother; and in these last days apart you seem to have tightened and tightened round my heart till I cannot even breathe without thinking of you, and the least little bit of fear about you makes me miserable.

I am very foolish, Jim, for on Monday night, after you had gone, I sat up till it was nearly daylight thinking over your words and looks. I fancied they had been different — that you had been different altogether lately. Perhaps it is only a calm setting in, a reaction after the wild love-making of the winter, when you seemed unable to live a single day without me. It could not be always like that; I knew it even at the time. Perhaps I fancy it all; write and tell me that I do. But I have felt since Monday as if only the ghost of your love remained to me. You didn't seem so glad to be with me; you did not look at me so often, and you broke off to talk of outside things just when I thought your heart was full of me and love of me.

Your mother came yesterday. She did not stay long. She did not ask me to go to her in the autumn. She said that she had heard from you, and my heart gave a throb of pain, knowing that I had not had a line. In her manner she seemed to divine that you had changed. I went upstairs after she had gone and prayed that if it were so I might never know it. But for my poor mummy I could have killed myself, so as to die in the midst of uncertainty that was torture, and yet joy compared to the knowledge that might come — the knowledge that your love had gone from me.

But to-night I am ashamed of all my foolishness, all my fears, and reproaching myself for doubting you; for I know that you love me — I do indeed. I live over all your words and looks. Do you remember that night by the pond — we stole out by the garden gate — when you said nothing could ever part us; that I was never, never to doubt you, no matter if you yourself had made me do so for the moment? You made me swear I never would. You looked down and said, "My sweet wife," and made me say, "Yes, Jim, your wife" after you, because you wanted me to feel that the tie between us could never be broken. It is the memory of those words, of that night, that helps me through the misery and wicked doubting of you now. Come and beat me for the doubting with a thick, thick stick, and I will count each stroke as joy, and love you more and more for every one that falls. It is the memory of that night, too, that makes me send you this — that gives me courage to

pour out all my heart to you. The days have passed for make-believes between us: I cannot pretend to you; I am yours, your own, and very own. Write me one line and make me happy again, and forgive me, or scold me, or do what you will, so that you love me — tell me that, and I shall be once more what I have been all these months, the happiest, most blessed girl in the whole wide world.

GWEN.

XIII.

HE.

Wednesday, August 8th.

DEAREST GWEN, — What a sentimental child you are! I have been busy: tennis, dances, garden party, picnic, Tommy coming of age, and speeches — all sorts of things crowded into a week. No time for letter writing. It is very jolly here, and everything uncommonly well managed. Nice people in the neighborhood; dinner party last night; took in Ethel Bertram — handsome girl, beautiful dark eyes, said to be worth a pile of money.

I think you ought to have more occupation, dear; you seem to be so dependent now on your affections and emotions; you want something more to fill your life. I wish you had a younger companion than your mother — you must try and get one somehow. I am going on to Devonshire, on Thursday, for two or three weeks, and shall, perhaps, stay here again for a day or two on my way back. Don't fidget, dear child. No more time.

JIM.

XIV.

SHE.

Thursday, 9th.

Jim, darling, don't say I am sentimental — it sounds like a reproach; but you know we always write each other foolish, loving letters. I am glad you are having a good time. I suppose it was very foolish of me to be unhappy, but it has been so odd to find morning after morning going by and no sign from you. You spoiled me at first by writing every day.

You didn't say you loved me in your note — tell me that you do next time; but don't write till you want to do so. Be happy, darling, and I will be happy too, in thinking of you.

GWEN.

XV.

HE.

(A TELEGRAM.)

HORRABRIDGE, S DEVON.
Friday, August 11th.

Had letter yesterday. Will write soon. Here for some days.

JIM.

XVI.

SHE.

Thursday, August 22d.

Jim, dear, do send me a line. It is nearly a fortnight since I heard from you, and for a long time your letters have been different, they have indeed, though I have tried to disguise it from myself. I cannot bear it any longer. Tell me what it all means, for it must mean something. Speak out, I implore you. You are not afraid of me, are you, darling? Your own loving

GWEN.

XVII.

HE.

HORRABRIDGE, *August 24th.*

It is strange how quickly a woman divines; and your heart has told you what I have not had the courage to say. Gwen, dear, I want to break it off, not because I do not think you what I have always thought you, or because I care for any one else, but simply because I want to be free. Our engagement no longer gives me the pleasure it did; I look forward to marriage as a sort of bondage into which I do not want to enter. I am perfectly frank with you because I feel that in an important matter like this it is only right. Then, dear, you know my mother never approved of it; parents are prudent people, and she thought the whole business unwise. I struggled against her reasoning all I could, for I loved you, and thought of your face, and of how you loved me. But, Gwen dear, there is a good deal in what she says. You see you couldn't leave your mother; and we should have to be careful about money; for I am not a frugal beggar, and there are lots of difficulties. I ought to have thought of them before, but you were so sweet and good, a thousand times too good for me, that I could think of nothing but you. Say you forgive me, and believe that I have loved you, for I have, and you won't hold me to it, will

you, Gwen? I know this will cost you a great deal, but you are a brave girl and will bear it; and don't reproach me—I could not bear your reproaches. I am a scoundrel and I know it, a ruffian, or I should love you beyond all things, as I ought.

J.

XVIII.

SHE.

August 25th.

Hold you to it when you want to be free? I would not be so much of a cobweb. Thank God that in your letter you were able at least to say that you had loved me. Reproach you? Why should I? Men are different from women—it is not for women to judge them. Besides, I love you—I say it once more for this last time on earth—so much and so truly that I cannot be angry, much less reproachful. Go, and be happy, my darling. God bless you, and good-by. GWEN.

XIX.

HE.

(A MONTH LATER.)

September 25th.

I believe I ought to ask you for my letters back. Will you send them, or write and say that you have burned them?—which you prefer. Forgive me for troubling you. J. F.

P.S.—I was so sorry to hear through the Markhams that you had been ill.

XX.

SHE.

HAMPSTEAD, *September 27th.*

I send back your letters, and your ring, and other things. I ought to have sent them before, but I could not. I am glad you asked for them. Thank you, I am better; and to-morrow we start for Montreux, and stay there through the winter; perhaps much longer.

Yours, G. W.

XXI.

HE.

(A YEAR LATER.)

LONDON, *July 30th.*

MY DEAR GWEN,—(Forgive me, but I cannot bring myself to address you any more formally)—I saw your dear mother's

death in the paper, yesterday. You have not been out of my thoughts since. Perhaps I ought not to write to you, but I can't help telling you how grieved I am for all that you must be suffering. It seems so rough that you should be left alone in the world. I heard that your Aunt Mary was with you, and I hope that you may be going to live with her; but probably you are not able yet to think of your future.

Of course I do not know if you are coming back to England soon; but if not, and there is anything I could get or do for you over here, or anything I could do for you at any time, I can't tell you what a privilege I should think it. This is not time to say it, perhaps, but I respect no woman on earth as I do you, and I should think it the greatest honor to be of service to you. I dare not hope that you will send me any reply to this, still less that you ever think of me kindly. But do believe how true is my sympathy. Yours always,

J. F.

XXII.

SHE.

GLION, *August 5th.*

Thank you for your letter. Yes, my dear mother is gone; it seems so strange and still without her. I sit and stare into an empty world. Thank you; but there is nothing you can do for me. I always think of you kindly. Why should I not do so?

I am going to live with Aunt Mary. My mother arranged it all. We are not coming back to England yet; we stay here a little time, then go down to Montreux again for winter.

Yours,

G. W.

XXIII.

HE.

(SIX MONTHS LATER.)

February 1st.

I don't know how I am going to write to you; I have been longing to do it for months past and not daring.

It will be better to plunge at once. Gwennie, could you forgive me and take me back? I should not be mad enough to think it possible, but that I know you to be the dearest girl on earth, and the most constant. You did love me once, and though perhaps you will only laugh at my audacity, deep down

in my heart something tells me that you care for me a little bit still, or at least that you could care for me again. I remember you saying in one of your last letters that the time had passed for make-believes between us; and if, in spite of all, you have any feeling left for me, I know that you will tell me frankly and truly just as a less noble woman would hide it.

I have often wondered how I could throw away a love like yours. I must have been mad. I know now what it is, having once had it, to be without it. You are far more to me than you were in the old days — far more than any words can tell. I am always thinking of you — you are never out of my thoughts. Oh, my darling, forgive me and take me back! Longing for a word from you, yet hardly daring to hope — I am yours, loving you. J.

XXIV.

SHE.

February 3d.

Yes, I am just the same. I never loved any one but you, and I have not left off loving you. I think I have known that you would come back to me. It feels like finding my way home, just when all the world was at an end. You do not know what anguish I have suffered and how I have tried to be brave; but without you, without my mother — O God! But now some light seems to be breaking through the darkness.

Yours once more, Jim, dear — my Jim again.

GWEN.

XXV.

HE.

February 5th.

MY SWEET GWEN, MY OWN DEAR GIRL, — I kissed your little letter and longed to kiss you. You are a million times too good for me, but you shall be happy this time if I can make you so. I can't believe that we are all right again. I should like to go down on my knees and ask you to forgive me for all I did, only I am such an impudent beggar that kneeling isn't much in my line.

And when shall we be married, my sweet? You had much better take possession of me as soon as possible — not that there is any fear of my going astray any more, but there's nothing to wait for, is there? When are you coming back from Montreux? Shall I come out and fetch you? I should like to — in

fact, I should rush off this very minute just to look at your dear face again, but that I am rather in awe of Aunt Mary — and I am rather in awe of you, too, my darling — and half afraid of seeing you for the first time. It is all too good to be true — at least, it feels so just yet. I could get away for a whole fortnight in March, and I don't think I can go longer than that without seeing you. It is horrible to remember all the months in which we have been apart. Let us be together now, and forever, as soon as it is possible. We will be so happy, the fates won't know us.

Your happy and devoted

JIM.

XXVI.

SHE.

February 12th.

DEAR, — Your letter almost made me laugh — it was just like you.

It is very strange to sit down and write to you again and to know that all is right between us. I don't realize it yet; but I shall soon, I suppose. Now, I feel as if I were inside a dream, groping about, trying to find my way into the waking world and half fearing that there it would be different. But life has become a restful thing again; some of the aching loneliness seems to have been swept out of my heart — not all, for I miss my dear mother terribly, and keep longing to tell her about this; it chokes me to think she cannot hear, that, perhaps, she does not know.

My dear old Jim, how glad I am to come back to you and to be loved again! In my thoughts I listen to the sound of your laughter, and see your face, and hear your quick footstep. I shall laugh, too. presently, but now I am still too much crushed by the remembrance of the past months, as well as overcome by this great happiness to do anything but be very grave and silent. Soon I shall grow used to it, and shake my bells again. For some strange reason I don't want you to come just yet. I am afraid of you, too, and yet I long to see and hear and know, not merely dream, as I half do still that you love me again, and that all the old life is going to begin once more. But come in March; Aunt Mary talks of going back to England in April.

We must not be married just yet, not till the summer is

over, till the year is past—till I am your frivolous Gwennie again, instead of a grave person in a sober black gown. Dear Jim, I begin to think how wonderful it will be to be with you all my life, to do things for you, to fetch and carry and be useful. A woman's hands always long to be busy for those she loves; since mother died mine have been idle—they are waiting for you. If I could only get rid of the tiredness that is still in my heart and soul—but I shall when I am with you. We will read and talk and think, and take long walks together—all this will make me strong again. We will begin when you come here—to this beautiful place. The snow is on the mountains white and thick, and the lake is blue. When the sun shines I wonder if heaven itself can be much better. Good night, dear Jim.

Your GWEN.

XXVII.

HE.

February 15th.

All right, my darling, I will come in March! I can hardly believe that I am going to see you again so soon; and oh, Gwennie, it is good to feel that you are mine again. You dear wifely thing, to plan how you will take care of me with your two sweet hands. I want you to have your ring back, my precious one; I shall bring it with me and put it on your finger.

I have been considering ways and means. Do you know that I am growing rich, and can give you many more luxuries and pretty frocks and things than I could have managed before? What do you say to a flat to begin with, somewhere on the right side of the park, not too far from the Club? My mother had one last year for a few months, and said it was much better and less trouble than a house.

Have you had a new photograph taken lately? I want to see if your face looks just the same, and what you have done with your dimple. I don't like to think of you in a black gown, my poor darling; you must try and put it off as soon as you can. I want to see you in the old blue one, and I would give anything to walk about with you once again in the garden at Hampstead. I often think of your face as it used to look under the trees, and of how we used to steal out in the dusk by the garden door, and over the heath and round by the pond. It is a thousand times better to think of than your Swiss moun-

tains and blue lake out there. But I shall come and see those too, soon, and then I shan't be jealous of them any more. Tell me in your next letter that you love me, my darling (you didn't in your last), and that I am just the same to you as you are to me, only you are a hundred times more — more and more every day.

Your adoring old JIM.

XXVIII.

SHE.

February 20th.

MY DEAREST JIM, — I am just the same, darling, and I love you; but I have not your wild spirits; that is all. The past year has sobered me down — only one year, as time is measured, but it has made me many long ones older.

I am glad you are growing rich; it shows that the world likes you. Yes, dear, we will have a flat if you like and where you like. It would be nice if we could get one somewhere away from noise and hurry. I long for a cozy room with bookshelves round it, and a library that will grow and grow, and prove that we have new books very often. I hope we shall do heaps of reading, for I have become quite studious; you will hardly know your frivolous sweetheart. But the walks by the lake or along the upper roads day after day, always alone amid the silences, have set me thinking. The world seems to have stretched out so far and to be so full of things it wants to tell us if we will but listen. I long to talk about them with you. We were young, and so much taken up with ourselves in the old days that we had little time to think of all that is most to us — after love.

You shall not scoff at this lovely place, you dear, bad person. I long to take you up to Les Avants, and over the way to Savoy, and to make you look towards the Rhone Valley — there at the head of the lake with the mountains on either side forming a gateway. I made a dozen romances about the far, far off in which the valley ends almost at the feet of Italy, till the other day, when I was sadly taken down by Uncle Alfred, who was here. I told him of all the mysteries and fairy stories that seemed to be lurking in the valley, and he laughed and said there was none there; it was only very long and very uninteresting, and might be described as Switzerland run to seed. I see it with such different eyes; but then they

portant business, and we start for England to-morrow. We arrive on Wednesday morning. Isn't this good news, old dear? I am so glad, that I don't want to talk about anything but happiness now — not even of heaven and earth and the musical glasses. I am afraid of myself — of my two feet that will walk towards you, and my two eyes that will see you, and my ears that will hear you. I love you, and you know it. Good-by till we meet. I will telegraph from Dover.

Your own GWEN.

P.S. — Oh, but I can't, I am shy; and it's so long since —

XXXI.

(THREE WEEKS LATER.)

BRYANSTON ST., *March 26th.*

DEAREST JIM, — Don't come this evening; there are so many things to look through; I must begin them indeed.

Thank you for your letter; you are very good to me, dear,

GWEN.

XXXII.

HE.

March 27th.

Very well, my darling, I'll wait till to-morrow. Is anything the matter with you, sweet? It is odd, but since the first rush of meeting you have seemed so grave, and there is a little stately reserve that clings to you and makes me feel out in the cold. I cannot even guess of what you are thinking: before I always knew without your telling me. Don't be like that with me, dear one. Let us be just as we were in the old days. I love you ten times more than I used, and there is something sad in your face that makes me loathe myself for all the pain I once caused you. You have forgiven me, haven't you, my darling? I was a brute, but I know it; and I love you with all my heart.

Your devoted JIM.

XXXIII.

SHE.

April 2d.

DEAREST JIM, — I am sorry, but I can't go to the National Gallery to-morrow. Aunt Mary wants me to help her a good deal just now. We think of going to Torquay for a little bit. This English wind is very cutting.

Thank you, dearie, for the magazines and the flowers. You are much too good to me; I often think that.

GWEN.

XXXIV.

HE.

April 4th.

MY DARLING,—What is the matter? You are always making excuses now; don't you care about seeing me? Have I offended you? Send me one line. My love for you has grown through all the months you were away, but I can't help fearing that yours for me has waned. JIM.

XXXV.

SHE.

April 6th.

Yes, Jim dear, I care about seeing you, of course; but I have so many things to think about. Aunt Mary's cough is much worse, and we have decided to go off to Torquay at once. We shall be gone by the time you get this. I am so sorry not to have seen you again, but we shall be back in a fortnight if it is warmer. Oh, Jim dear, once more you are too good to me! Why have you sent me that packet?

Your grateful GWEN.

XXXVI.

SHE.

(A TELEGRAM.)

April 8th.

The address is Belle Vue, Torquay. Aunt Mary better: will write to-morrow.

XXXVII.

HE.

LONDON, *April 8th.*

GWEN, DEAR,—This can't go on. Things are all wrong between us. I felt it even the first evening you came back. What is the matter? Do tell me, my darling. Is it anything that I have said or done? With greater love than words can tell,

Your miserable old JIM.

Write and tell me that you will take it, my darling, and bear with me, and try to love me again. I can't let you go, Gwen. It's no good, I can't face it.

Your adoring and devoted and miserable old JIM.

XLIII.

SHE.

April 15th.

But, Jim dear, you must—you must set me free. I can't go on; it is not that I am strained or morbid or too introspective, or anything of the sort, only this—I can't marry you, and I can't. Sorrow and loneliness have made me think, have opened my eyes wide, and I see that we are strangers inwardly, even while outwardly we are lovers. You loved me at Hampstead for my laughter, my love of you, my big hat, the shady garden, my gladness to be loved—for a hundred things that do not belong to the life that is mine now. So, too, I loved you back, because of your merry voice, your handsomeness, your love of me—because of the holiday time we made of life when we were together. But that time is over forever and ever. You cannot give me back my laughter, my girlhood, the happiness that almost frightened me; they are gone, they will never find their way to me again; and my love for you was bound up with them—it has gone, too. Sometimes my heart cries out, longing for its old feelings again, till I feel like Faust before he conjured Mephistopheles to him, save for his years—the actual years that time doles out; or like a Hindu for whom the time has come to vanish into the forest and dream. Only twenty-three, Jim, but youth has gone; you cannot have back the girl who laughed and loved you so—she does not exist; parting and silence killed her. It sounds like a reproach, but God knows it is not one. And no new feelings have grown up to take the place of the old ones that are dead. We are almost strangers, and I cannot reconcile myself to the thought of our being more than friends. I even shrink from you and shudder. Your laughter does not gladden me; your talk does not hold my senses any longer; and concerning the things of which I think most my lips of themselves refuse to speak.

The very ring on my finger frets and worries me. In the old days I used to kiss it, and wish it hurt me, that it burned or bit, so that I might feel through pain, as through all things, the joy of loving you. But now I turn and twist it round as a

prisoner does his fetter, longing, yet afraid, as he is unable to shake it off, till you shall give me leave and set me free.

You can't marry me, Jim dear, feeling as I do now. It would be madness. It is of no use making our whole lives a failure, or a tragedy, because we have not the courage to face the pain of parting now. If I thought you would be happy with me I would hesitate, but we should neither of us be happy. And it is not as if this were a passing phase; I know that it is not. I live in another world from you now. I do not know if it is better or worse, only that it is different; it seems as if in the past months a hand was stretched out; I took it and went on, almost dazed — on and on while you stood still. I am going farther, and shall never return, but you will be in the world behind me. There may be happiness for me, and life and love once more; I do not know; but it will be far, far off, away from you. Between us all things have finished. I cannot turn and go back into the old year, the old love, the old life; I have passed them all by for good or ill. Oh, Jim, understand and let me go! forgive me all the pain I have cost you, and let me go.

GWEN.

XLIV.

HE.

April 15th.

All right — go. I thought you the most constant girl on earth: that you loved me as I do you. Since it pleases you to play fast and loose with me, let it be so. My feelings, of course, are of no account weighed against your fancies. You have shaken all my faith in women; for I did believe in you, Gwen. Good-by,

JIM.

XLV.

SHE.

(A WEEK LATER.)

April 22d.

I send back your letters and things once more — it is better to get it over. Return mine or burn them as you please. Aunt Mary cannot stand this English climate, and we start almost immediately for Italy; probably to live there altogether. I think it will be a relief to you to know this. I hope with all my heart that you will soon forget the pain I have given you,

that all good things may come to you; and one day I hope that you will marry some one who will make you happy, and love you as I did long ago in the dear days at Hampstead.

Good-by, GWEN.



LOVE AMONG THE RUINS.[1]

By ROBERT BROWNING.

[ROBERT BROWNING, English poet, was born in London, May 7, 1812; married Elizabeth Barrett in 1846, and lived in Italy the greater part of his life afterward. His first considerable poem was "Pauline" (1833, anonymous). There followed, among others, "Paracelsus," "Strafford," "Sordello," "Bells and Pomegranates" (a collection including "Pippa Passes," "King Victor and King Charles," "Colombe's Birthday," "The Return of the Druses," "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon," "Luria," and "A Soul's Tragedy"), "Men and Women," "Dramatis Personæ," "The Ring and the Book," "Balaustion's Adventure," "Fifine at the Fair," "Red Cotton Nightcap Country." He died in Venice, December 12, 1889.]

I.

WHERE the quiet-colored end of evening smiles,
Miles and miles,
On the solitary pastures where our sheep
Half-asleep
Tinkle homeward thro' the twilight, stray or stop
As they crop—
Was the site once of a city great and gay
(So they say),
Of our country's very capital, its prince,
Ages since,
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
Peace or war.

II.

Now,—the country does not even boast a tree,
As you see,
To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
From the hills
Intersect and give a name to (else they run
Into one),
Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
Up like fires

[1] By permission of Smith, Elder & Co.

O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor be pressed,
Twelve abreast.

III.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was!
Such a carpet as, this summer time, o'erspreads
And imbeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone —
Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Long ago;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame;
And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

IV.

Now, — the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
Overscored,
While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
Through the chinks —
Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,
And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,
And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

V.

And I know — while thus the quiet-colored eve
Smiles to leave
To their folding, all our many tinkling fleece
In such peace,
And the slopes and rills in undistinguished gray
Melt away —
That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
Waits me there

In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul
For the goal,
When the king looked, where she looks now, breathless, dumb
Till I come.

VI.

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,
All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades,
Colonnades,
All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—and then,
All the men!
When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
Each on each.

VII.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
South and North,
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
As the sky,
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force—
Gold, of course.
Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!
Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise, and sin!
Shut them in,
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
Love is best



JEAN AND BETTINA.[1]

By LUDOVIC HALÉVY.

(From "The Abbé Constantin.")

[LUDOVIC HALÉVY, French dramatist and novelist, son of Léon Halévy, a distinguished littérateur, was born at Paris, January 1, 1834 He was for many years in the employ of the ministry of state and the colonial office, and then began writing for the stage His dramatic works, written chiefly in collaboration with Meilhac, include· librettos for Offenbach's "La Belle Hélène," "Barbe Bleue," "La Grande Duchesse," etc , and for Bizet's "Carmen" (adapted from Méri-

[1] By permission of Mr. J. Macqueen. (Cr 8vo Price 3s. 6d)

mée); and several vaudevilles and comedies, of which "Frou-Frou" is the most popular. Among his romances are · "L'Abbé Constantin," which has passed through more than one hundred and fifty editions; "Deux Mariages", "Princesse"; "Karikari," short stories Halévy was admitted to the French Academy in 1886, and recently became an officer of the Legion of Honor.]

BETTINA remained alone; she tried to keep her word; she endeavored to go to sleep, but only half succeeded. She fell into a half-slumber, that left her floating between dream and reality. She had promised to think of nothing, and yet she thought of him, always of him, of nothing but him, vaguely, confusedly.

How long a time passed thus she could not tell.

All at once it seemed to her that some one was walking in her room; she half opened her eyes, and thought she recognized her sister. In a very sleepy voice she said to her: —

"You know I love him."

"Hush! Go to sleep."

"I am asleep! I am asleep!"

At last she really fell asleep, but slept less soundly than usual, for about four o'clock in the morning she was suddenly awakened by a noise, which the night before would not have disturbed her slumber. The rain was falling in torrents, and beating against her window.

"Oh, it is raining!" she thought; "he will get wet!"

That was her first thought. She rose, crossed the room barefooted, half opened the shutters. The day had broken gray and lowering; the clouds were heavy with rain, the wind blew tempestuously, and drove the rain in gusts before it.

Bettina did not go back to bed; she felt it would be quite impossible to sleep any more. She put on a dressing gown, and remained at the window; she watched the falling rain. Since he positively must go, she would have liked the weather to be fine; she would have liked bright sunshine to cheer his first day's march.

When she came to Longueval a month before, Bettina did not know what *une étape* or day's march meant. But she knew now. A day's march for the artillery is twenty or thirty miles, with an hour's halt for luncheon. The Abbé Constantin had taught her that; when going their rounds in the morning among the poor, Bettina overwhelmed the Curé with questions about military affairs, and particularly about the artillery service.

Twenty or thirty miles in this pouring rain! Poor Jean! Bettina thought of young Turner, young Norton, of Paul de Lavardens, who would sleep calmly till ten in the morning, while Jean was exposed to this deluge.

Paul de Lavardens!

This name awoke in her a painful memory, the memory of that waltz the evening before. To have danced like that, while Jean was so obviously in distress! That waltz took the proportions of a crime in her eyes; it was a horrible thing that she had done.

And then, had she not been wanting in courage and frankness in that last interview with Jean? He neither could nor dared say anything; but she might have shown more tenderness, more expansiveness. Sad and suffering as he was, she should never have allowed him to go back on foot. She ought to have detained him at any price. Her imagination tormented and excited her; Jean must have carried away with him the impression that she was a bad little creature, heartless and pitiless. And in half an hour he was going away,—away for three weeks. Ah! if she could by any means—but there is a way! The regiment is to pass along by the park wall below the terrace.

Bettina was seized with a wild desire to see Jean pass; he would understand well, if he saw her at such an hour, that she had come to beg his pardon for her cruelty of the previous evening. Yes, she would go! But she had promised Suzie that she would be as good as an angel, and to do what she was going to do, was that being as good as an angel? She would make up for it by acknowledging all to Suzie when she came in again, and Suzie would forgive her.

She would go! She had made up her mind. Only how should she dress? She had nothing at hand but a ball dress, a muslin dressing gown, little high-heeled slippers, and blue satin shoes. She might wake her maid. Oh! never would she dare to do that, and time pressing; a quarter to five! the regiment could start at five o'clock.

She might, perhaps, manage with the muslin dressing gown and the satin slippers; in the hall she might find her hat, her little boots which she wore in the garden, and the large tartan cloak for driving in wet weather. She half opened her door with infinite precautions. Everything was asleep in the house; she crept along the corridor, she descended the staircase.

If only the little boots are there in their place; that is her great anxiety. There they are! She slips them on over her satin shoes, she wraps herself in the great mantle.

She hears that the rain has redoubled in violence. She notices one of those large umbrellas which the footmen use on the box in wet weather; she seizes it; she is ready; but when she is ready to go she sees that the hall door is fastened by a great iron bar. She tries to raise it; but the bolt holds fast, resists all her efforts, and the great clock in the hall slowly strikes five. He is starting at that moment.

She will see him! she will see him! Her will is excited by these obstacles. She makes a great effort; the bar yields, slips back in the groove. But Bettina has made a long scratch on her hand, from which issues a slender stream of blood. Bettina twists her handkerchief round her hand, takes her great umbrella, turns the key in the lock, and opens the door.

At last she is out of the house!

The weather is frightful. The wind and the rain rage together. It takes five or six minutes to reach the terrace which looks over the road. Bettina darts forward courageously; her head bent, hidden under her immense umbrella. She has already taken a few steps when all at once, furious, mad, blinding, a squall bursts upon Bettina, blows open her mantle, drives her along, lifts her almost from the ground, turns the umbrella violently inside out; that is nothing, the disaster is not yet complete.

Bettina has lost one of her little boots; they were not practical sabots, they were only pretty little things for fine weather; and at this moment, when Bettina is desperately struggling against the tempest, with her blue satin shoe half buried in the wet gravel, at this moment the wind bears to her the distant echo of a trumpet call. It is the regiment starting.

Bettina makes a desperate effort. abandons her umbrella, finds her little boot, fastens it on as well as she can, and starts off running, with a deluge descending on her head.

At last she is in the wood; the trees protect her a little. Another call, nearer this time. Bettina fancies she hears the rolling of the gun carriages. She makes a last effort; here is the terrace, she is there just in time.

Twenty yards off she perceived the white horses of the trumpeters, and along the road she caught glimpses of the long line of guns and wagons vaguely rolling through the fog.

She sheltered herself under one of the old limes which bordered the terrace. She watched, she waited. He is there among that confused mass of riders. Will she be able to recognize him? And he, will he see her? Will any chance make him turn his head that way?

Bettina knows that he is lieutenant in the second battery of his regiment; she knows that a battery is composed of six guns and six ammunition wagons. Of course the Abbé Constantin taught her that. Thus she must allow the first battery to pass, that is to say, count six guns, six wagons, and then — he will be there.

There he is at last, wrapped in his great cloak, and it is he who sees, who recognizes her first. A few moments before he had been recalling to his mind a long walk which he had taken with her one evening on that terrace, when night was falling. He raised his eyes, and the very spot where he remembered having seen her was the spot where he found her again. He bowed, and, bareheaded in the rain, turning round in his saddle, as long as he could see her he looked at her. He said again to himself what he had said the previous evening: —

"It is for the last time."

With a charming gesture of both hands she returned his farewell, and this gesture, repeated many times, brought her hands so near her lips, that one might have fancied ——

"Ah!" she thought, "if after that he does not understand that I love him, and does not forgive me my money."

It is the tenth of August, the day which is to bring Jean back to Longueval.

Bettina wakes very early, rises, and runs immediately to the window. The evening before the sky had looked threatening, heavy with clouds. Bettina slept but little, and all night prayed that it might not rain the next day.

In the early morning a dense fog envelops the park of Longueval, the trees of which are hidden from view as by a curtain. But gradually the rays of the sun dissipate the mist, the trees become vaguely discernible through the vapor; then, suddenly, the sun shines out brilliantly, flooding with light the park, and the fields beyond; and the lake, where the black swans are disporting themselves in the radiant light, appears as bright as a sheet of polished metal.

The weather is going to be beautiful. Bettina is a little

superstitious. The sunshine gives her good hope and good courage. "The day begins well, so it will finish well."

The regiment is entering the village, and suddenly a burst of music, martial and joyous, sweeps across the space. All three remain silent; it is the regiment; it was Jean passing; the sound becomes fainter, dies away.

The regiment broke into a trot along the highroad, after leaving the village. There is the terrace where Bettina had been the other morning. Jean says to himself: —

"Supposing she should be there."

He dreads and hopes it at the same time. He raises his head, he looks, she is not there.

He has not seen her again, he will not see her again, for a long time at least. He will start that very evening at six o'clock for Paris; one of the head men in the War Office is interested in him; he will try to get exchanged into another regiment.

Alone at Cercottes, Jean has had time to reflect deeply, and this is the result of his reflections. He cannot, he must not, be Bettina Percival's husband.

The men dismount at the barracks, Jean takes leave of his colonel, his comrades; all is over. He is free, he can go.

But he does not go yet; he looks around him. . . . How happy he was three months ago, when he rode out of that great yard amidst the noise of the cannon rolling over the pavement of Souvigny, but how sadly he would ride away to-day! Formerly his life was there; where would it be now?

He goes home, he goes up to his own room, he writes to Mrs. Scott; he tells her that his duties oblige him to leave immediately; he cannot dine at the castle, and begs Mrs. Scott to remember him to Miss Bettina. Bettina, ah! what trouble it cost him to write that name; he closes his letter; he will send it directly.

He makes his preparations for departure; then he will go to wish his godfather farewell. That is what costs him most; he will only speak to him of a short absence.

He opens one of the drawers of his bureau to take out some money. The first thing that meets his eyes is a little note on bluish paper; it is the only note which he has ever received from her.

"Will you have the kindness to give to the servant the book of which you spoke yesterday evening? Perhaps it will

be a little heavy for me, but yet I should like to try to read it. We shall see you to-night; come as early as possible." It is signed "BETTINA."

Jean reads and re-reads these few lines, but soon he can read them no longer, his eyes are dim.

"It is all that is left me of her," he thinks.

It was three o'clock when Jean arrived at the vicarage, and the Curé said immediately: —

"You told me that you wanted to speak to me; what is it about?"

"About something, my dear godfather, which will surprise you, will grieve you——"

"Grieve me!"

"Yes, and which grieves me too — I have come to bid you farewell."

"Farewell! You are going away?"

"Yes, I am going away."

"When?"

"To-day, in two hours."

"In two hours? But, my dear boy, we were going to dine at the castle to-night."

"I have just written to Mrs. Scott to excuse me. I am positively obliged to go."

"Directly?"

"Directly."

"And where are you going?"

"To Paris."

"To Paris! Why this sudden determination?"

"Not so very sudden. I have thought about it for a long time."

"And you have said nothing about it to me! Jean, something has happened. You are a man, and I have no longer the right to treat you as a child; but you know how much I love you; if you have vexations, troubles, why not tell them to me? I could perhaps advise you. Jean, why go to Paris?"

"I did not wish to tell you; it will give you pain; but you have the right to know. I am going to Paris to ask to be exchanged into another regiment."

"Into another regiment! To leave Souvigny!"

"Yes, that is just it. I must leave Souvigny for a short time, for a little while only; but to leave Souvigny is necessary; it is what I wish above all things."

"And what about me, Jean; do you not think of me? A little while! A little while! But that is all that remains to me of life, — a little while. And during these last days that I owe to the grace of God, it was my happiness, yes, Jean, my happiness, to feel you here, near me, and now you are going away! Jean, wait a little patiently, it cannot be for very long now. Wait until the good God has called me to Himself; wait till I shall be gone, to meet there, at His side, your father and your mother. Do not go, Jean, do not go!"

"If you love me, I love you too, and you know it well."

"Yes, I know it."

"I have just the same affection for you now that I had when I was quite little, when you took me to yourself, when you brought me up. My heart has not changed, will never change. But if duty — if honor — oblige me to go?"

"Ah! if it is duty, if it is honor, I say nothing more, Jean; that stands before all! — all! — all! I have always known you a good judge of your duty, your honor. Go, my boy, go; I ask you nothing more, I wish to know no more."

"But I wish to tell you all," cried Jean, vanquished by his emotion, "and it is better that you should know all. You will stay here, you will return to the castle, you will see her again — her!"

"See her! Who?"

"Bettina!"

"Bettina?"

"I adore her, I adore her!"

"Oh, my poor boy!"

"Pardon me for speaking to you of these things; but I tell you as I would have told my father. And then, I have not been able to speak of it to any one, and it stifled me; yes, it is a madness which has seized me, which has grown upon me little by little against my will, for you know very well — My God! It was here that I began to love her. You know, when she came here with her sister — the little rouleaux of a thousand francs — her hair fell down — and then the evening, the month of Mary. Then I was permitted to see her freely, familiarly, and you yourself spoke to me constantly of her. You praised her sweetness, her goodness. How often have you told me that there was no one in the world better than she is!"

"And I thought so, and I think so still. And no one here knows her better than I do, for I alone have seen her with the

poor. If you only knew how tender and how good she is! Neither wretchedness nor suffering are repulsive to her. But, my dear boy, I am wrong to tell you all this."

"No, no, I shall see her no more, but I like to hear you speak of her."

"In your whole life, Jean, you will never meet a better woman, nor one who has more elevated sentiments. To such a point, that one day — she had taken me with her in an open carriage, full of toys — she was taking these toys to a poor little sick girl, and when she gave them to her, to make the poor little thing laugh, to amuse her, she talked so prettily to her that I thought of you, and I said to myself, I remember it now, 'Ah, if she were poor!'"

"Ah, if she were poor! but she is not."

"Oh, no! But what can you do, my poor boy? If it gives you pain to see her, to live near her, above all, if it will prevent you suffering — go away, go — and yet, and yet ——"

The old priest became thoughtful, let his head fall between his hands, and remained silent for some moments; then he continued: —

"And yet, Jean, do you know what I think? I have seen a great deal of Mademoiselle Bettina since she came to Longueval. Well — when I reflect — it did not astonish me then that any one should be interested in you, for it seemed so natural — but she talked always, yes, always of you."

"Of me?"

"Yes, of you, and of your father and mother; she was curious to know how you lived. She begged me to explain to her what a soldier's life was, the life of a true soldier who loved his profession, and performed his duties conscientiously. . . . It is extraordinary, since you have told me this, recollections crowd upon me, a thousand little things collect and group themselves together. . . . She returned from Hâvre day before yesterday at three o'clock. Well, an hour after her arrival she was here. And it was of you of whom she spoke directly. She asked if you had written to me, if you had not been ill, when you would arrive, at what hour, if the regiment would pass through the village."

"It is useless at this moment, my dear godfather," said Jean, "to recall all these memories."

"No, it is not useless. . . . She seemed so pleased, so happy even, at the thought of seeing you again! She would make

quite a *fête* of the dinner this evening. She would introduce you to her brother-in-law, who has come back. There is no one else at the château at this moment, not a single visitor. She insisted strongly on this point, and I remember her last words — she was there, on the threshold of the door —

"'There will only be five of us,' she said, 'you and Monsieur Jean, my sister, my brother-in-law, and myself.'

"And then she added, laughing, 'Quite a family party.'

"With these words she went, she almost ran away. Quite a family party! Do you know what I think, Jean? Do you know?"

"You must not think that, you must not."

"Jean, I believe that she loves you!"

"And I believe it too."

"You too!"

"When I left her, three weeks ago, she was so agitated, so moved! She saw me sad and unhappy, she would not let me go. It was at the door of the château. I was obliged to tear myself, yes, literally tear myself, away. I should have spoken, burst out, told her all. After having gone a few steps, I stopped and turned. She could no longer see me, I was lost in the darkness; but I could see her. She stood there motionless, her shoulders and arms bare, in the rain, her eyes fixed on the way by which I had gone. Perhaps I am mad to think that. Perhaps it was only a feeling of pity. But no, it was something more than pity, for do you know what she did the next morning? She came at five o'clock in the most frightful weather to see me pass with the regiment — and then — the way she bade me adieu — oh, my friend, my dear old friend!"

"But then," said the poor Curé, completely bewildered, completely at a loss, "but then I do not understand you at all. If you love her, Jean, and if she loves you."

"But that is, above all, the reason why I must go. If it were only I, if I were certain that she had not perceived my love, certain that she had not been touched by it, I would stay, I would stay — for nothing but for the sweet joy of seeing her; and I would love her from afar, without any hope, for nothing but the happiness of loving her. But no, she has understood too well, and far from discouraging me — that is what forces me to go."

"No, I do not understand it! I know well, my poor boy, we are speaking of things in which I am no great scholar, but

you are both good, young, and charming; you love her, she would love you, and you will not!"

"And her money! her money!"

"What matters her money! If it is only that, is it because of her money that you have loved her? It is rather in spite of her money. Your conscience, my son, would be quite at peace with regard to that, and that would suffice."

"No, that would not suffice. To have a good opinion of one's self is not enough; that opinion must be shared by others."

"Oh, Jean! Among all who know you, who can doubt you?"

"Who knows? And then there is another thing besides this question of money, another thing more serious and more grave. I am not the husband suited to her."

"And who could be more worthy than you?"

"The question to be considered is not my worth; we have to consider what she is and what I am, to ask what ought to be her life and what ought to be my life. . . . One day, Paul —you know he has rather a blunt way of saying things, but that very bluntness often places thoughts much more clearly before us—we were speaking of her; Paul did not suspect anything; if he had, he is good-natured, he would not have spoken thus—well, he said to me:—

"'What she needs is a husband who would be entirely devoted to her, to her alone; a husband who would have no other care than to make her existence a perpetual holiday; a husband who would give himself, his whole life, in return for her money.'

"You know me; such a husband I cannot, I must not be. I am a soldier, and will remain one. If the chances of my career sent me some day to a garrison in the depths of the Alps, or in some almost unknown village in Algeria, could I ask her to follow me? Could I condemn her to the life of a soldier's wife, which is in some degree the life of a soldier himself? Think of the life which she leads now, of all that luxury, of all those pleasures!"

"Yes," said the Abbé, "that is more serious than the question of money."

"So serious that there is no hesitation possible. During the three weeks that I passed alone in the camp I have well considered all that; I have thought of nothing else, and loving her as I do love, the reason must indeed be strong which shows me clearly my duty. I must go. I must go far, very far away,

as far as possible. I shall suffer much, but I must not see her again! I must not see her again!"

Jean sank on a chair near the fireplace. He remained there quite overpowered with his emotion. The old priest looked at him.

"To see you suffer, my poor boy! That such suffering should fall upon you! It is too cruel, too unjust!"

At that moment some one knocked gently at the door.

"Ah!" said the Curé, "do not be afraid, Jean. I will send them away."

The Abbé went to the door, opened it, and recoiled as if before an unexpected apparition.

It was Bettina. In a moment she had seen Jean, and going direct to him—

"You!" cried she. "Oh, how glad I am!"

He rose. She took both his hands in hers, and addressing the Curé, she said:—

"I beg your pardon, Monsieur le Curé, for going to him first. I saw you yesterday, but I have not seen him for three whole weeks, not since a certain night when he left our house sad and suffering."

She still held Jean's hands. He had neither power to make a movement nor to utter a sound.

"And now," continued Bettina, "are you better? No, not yet, I can see; still sad. Ah, I have done well to come! It was an inspiration! However, it embarrassed me much to find you here. You will understand why when you know what I have come to ask of your godfather."

She relinquished his hands, and, turning towards the Abbé, said:—

"I have come to beg you to listen to my confession—yes, my confession. But do not go away, Monsieur Jean; I will make my confession publicly. I am quite willing to speak before you, and now I think of it, it will be better thus. Let us sit down, shall we?"

She felt herself full of confidence and daring. She burnt with fever, but with that fever which on the field of battle gives to a soldier ardor, heroism, and disdain of danger. The emotion which made Bettina's heart beat quicker than usual was a high and generous emotion. She said to herself:—

"I wish to be loved! I wish to love! I wish to be happy! I wish to make him happy! And since he cannot have the

courage to do it, I must have it for both. I must march alone, my head high and my heart at ease, to the conquest of our love, to the conquest of our happiness!"

From her first words Bettina had gained over the Abbé and Jean a complete ascendency. They let her say what she liked, they let her do as she liked, they felt that the hour was supreme; they understood that what was happening would be decisive, irrevocable, but neither was in a position to foresee.

They sat down obediently, almost automatically; they waited, they listened. Alone of the three, Bettina retained her composure. It was in a calm and even voice that she began.

"I must tell you first, Monsieur le Curé, to set your conscience quite at rest, — I must tell you that I am here with the consent of my sister and my brother-in-law. They know why I have come; they know what I am going to do. They not only know, but they approve. That is settled, is it not? Well, what brings me here is your letter, Monsieur Jean, — that letter in which you tell my sister that you cannot dine with us this evening, and that you are positively obliged to leave here. This letter has unsettled all my plans. I had intended this evening — of course with the permission of my sister and brother-in-law — I had intended after dinner to take you into the park, Monsieur Jean, to seat myself with you on a bench; I was childish enough to choose the place beforehand. There I should have delivered a little speech, well prepared, well studied, almost learnt by heart, for since your departure I have scarcely thought of anything else; I repeat it to myself from morning to night. That is what I had proposed to do, and you understand that your letter caused me much embarrassment. I reflected a little, and thought that if I addressed my little speech to your godfather it would be almost the same as if I addressed it to you. So I have come, Monsieur le Curé, to beg you to listen to me."

"I will listen to you, Miss Percival," stammered the Abbé.

"I am rich, Monsieur le Curé, I am very rich, and, to speak frankly, I love my wealth very much — yes, very much. To it I owe the luxury which surrounds me, luxury which, I acknowledge, — this is a confession, — is by no means disagreeable to me. My excuse is that I am still very young; it will perhaps pass as I grow older, but of that I am not very sure. I have another excuse: it is, that if I love money a little for the

pleasure it procures me, I love it still more for the good which it allows me to do. I love it — selfishly, if you like — for the joy of giving; but I think that my fortune is not very badly placed in my hands. Well, Monsieur le Curé, in the same way that you have the care of souls, it seems that I have the care of money. I have always thought, 'I wish, above all things, that my husband should be worthy of sharing this great fortune. I wish to be very sure that he will make a good use of it with me while I am here, and after me if I must leave this world first.' I thought of another thing; I thought, 'He who will be my husband must be some one I can love!' And now, Monsieur le Curé, this is where my confession really begins. There is a man who for the last two months has done all he can to conceal from me that he loves me, but I do not doubt that this man loves me. . . . You do love me, Jean?"

"Yes," said Jean, in a low voice, his eyes cast down, looking like a criminal, "I do love you!"

"I knew it very well, but I wanted to hear you say it; and now, I entreat you, do not utter a single word. Any words of yours would be useless, would disturb me, would prevent me from going straight to my aim, and telling you what I positively intend to say. Promise me to stay there, sitting still, without moving, without speaking. You promise me?"

"I promise you."

Bettina, as she went on speaking, began to lose a little of her confidence; her voice trembled slightly. She continued, however, with a gayety that was a little forced.

"Monsieur le Curé, I do not blame you for what has happened, yet all this is a little your fault."

"My fault!"

"Ah! do not speak, not even you. Yes, I repeat it, your fault. . . . I am certain that you have spoken well of me to Jean, much too well. Perhaps without that he would not have thought — And at the same time, you have spoken very well of him to me. Not too well — no, no — but yet very well! Then I had so much confidence in you that I began to look at him, and examine him with a little more attention. I began to compare him with those who, during the last year, had asked my hand. It seemed to me that he was in every respect superior to them.

"At last it happened on a certain day, or rather on a certain evening — three weeks ago, the evening before you left here,

Jean — I discovered that I loved you. . . . Yes, Jean, I love you! . . . I entreat you, do not speak; stay where you are; do not come near me.

"Before I came here I thought I had supplied myself with a good stock of courage, but you see I have no longer my fine composure of a minute ago. But I have still something to tell you, and the most important of all. Jean, listen to me carefully; I do not wish for a reply torn from you in your emotion; I know that you love me. If you marry me, I do not wish it to be only for love: I wish it to be also for reasons. During the fortnight before you left here, you took so much pains to avoid me, to escape any conversation, that I have not been able to show myself to you as I am. Perhaps there are in me certain qualities which you do not suspect. . . .

"Jean, I know what you are, I know to what I should bind myself in marrying you, and I would be for you not only the loving and tender woman, but the courageous and constant wife. I know your entire life; your godfather has related it to me. I know why you became a soldier, I know what duties, what sacrifices, the future may demand from you. Jean, do not suppose that I will turn you from any of these duties, from any of these sacrifices. If I could be disappointed with you for anything, it would be, perhaps, for this thought, — oh! you must have had it, — that I should wish you free, and quite my own, that I should ask you to abandon your career. Never! never! Understand well, I will never ask such a thing of you. . . .

"A young girl whom I know did that when she married, and she did wrong. I love you, and I wish you to be just what you are. It is because you live differently from, and better than, those who have before desired me for a wife, that I desire you for a husband. I should love you less — perhaps I should not love you at all, though that would be very difficult — if you were to begin to live as all those live whom I would not have. When I can follow you, I will follow you; wherever you are will be my duty, wherever you are will be my happiness. And if the day comes when you cannot take me, the day when you must go alone, — well, Jean, on that day I promise you to be brave, and not take your courage from you.

"And now, Monsieur le Curé, it is not to him, it is to you that I am speaking: I want *you* to answer me, not him. Tell

ne, . . . if he loves me, and feels me worthy of his love, would t be just to make me expiate so severely the fortune that I possess! Tell me, should he not agree to be my husband?"

"Jean," said the old priest, gravely, "marry her. It is your duty, and it will be your happiness!"

Jean approached Bettina, took her in his arms, and pressed upon her brow the first kiss.

Bettina gently freed herself, and addressing the Abbé said: —

"And now, Monsieur l'Abbé, I have still one thing to ask you. I wish — I wish ——"

"You wish?"

"Pray, Monsieur le Curé, kiss me too."

The old priest kissed her paternally on both cheeks, and then Bettina continued: —

"You have often told me, Monsieur le Curé, that Jean was almost like your own son, and I shall be almost like your own daughter, shall I not? So you will have two children, that is all."

* * * * * * *

A month after, on the 12th of September, at midday, Bettina, in the simplest of wedding dresses, entered the church of Longueval, while, placed behind the altar, the trumpets of the 9th Artillery rang joyously through the arches of the old church.

Nancy Turner had begged for the honor of playing the organ on this solemn occasion, for the poor little harmonium had disappeared; an organ with resplendent pipes rose in the gallery of the church — it was Miss Percival's wedding present to the Abbé Constantin.

The old Curé said mass, Jean and Bettina knelt before him, he pronounced the Benediction, and then remained for some moments in prayer, his arms extended, calling down with his whole soul the blessing of Heaven on his two children.

Then floated from the organ the same reverie of Chopin's which Bettina had played the first time that she had entered that village church, where was to be consecrated the happiness of her life.

And this time it was Bettina who wept.

BEAUTY.[1]

A Combination from Sappho.

Translated by DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

I.

Like the sweet apple which reddens upon the topmost bough,
Atop on the topmost twig,—which the pluckers forgot, somehow,—
Forgot it not, nay, but got it not, for none could get it till now.

II

Like the wild hyacinth flower which on the hills is found,
Which the passing feet of the shepherds forever tear and wound,
Until the purple blossom is trodden into the ground.



JULIA.

By ROBERT HERRICK.

Whenas in silks my Julia goes
Then, then (methinks) how sweetly flows
That liquefaction of her clothes.

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free;
O how that glittering taketh me!

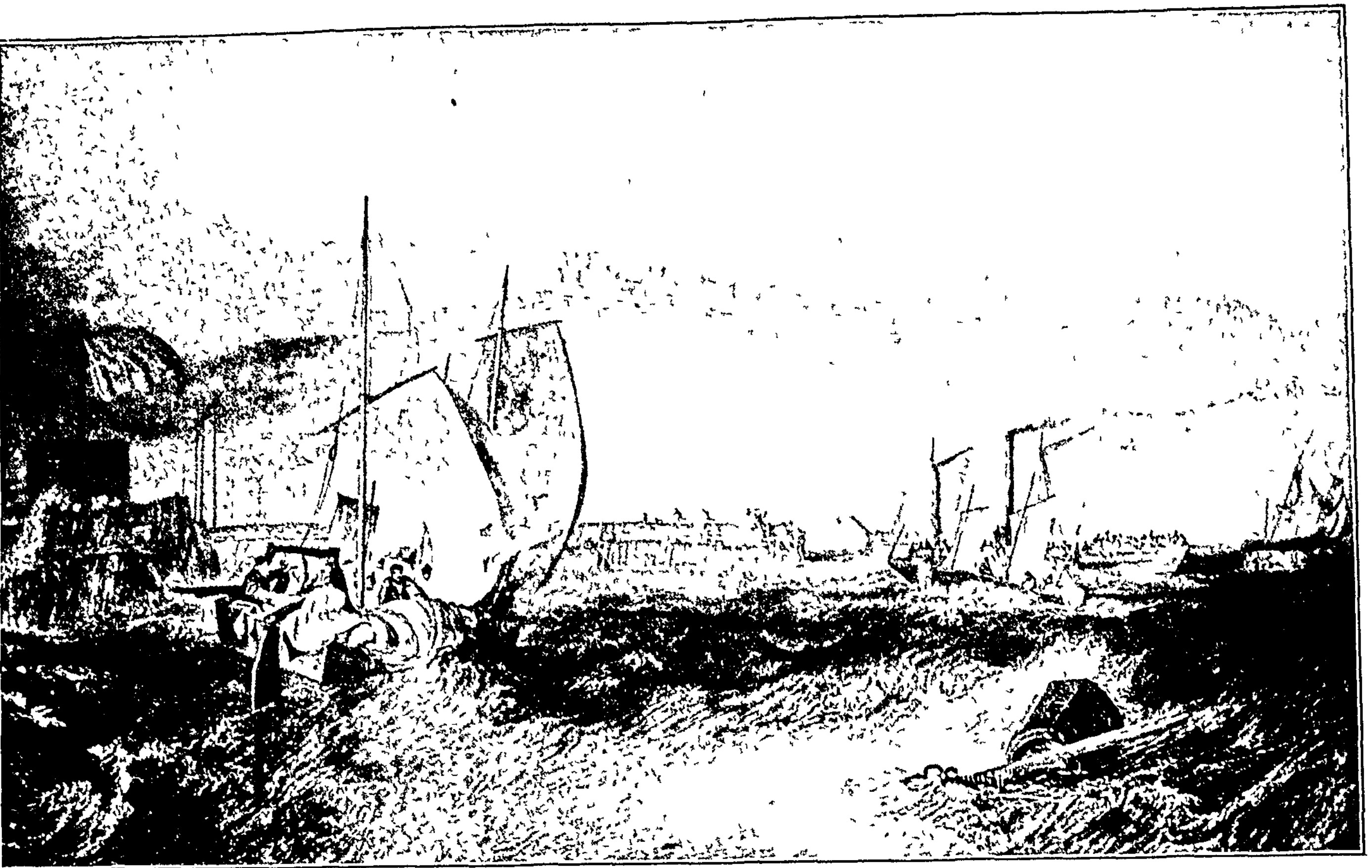


BEAUTY AND DRESS.

By ROBERT HERRICK.

My Love in her attire doth show her wit,
It doth so well become her:
For every season she hath dressings fit,
For Winter, Spring, and Summer.
No beauty she doth miss
When all her robes are on
But Beauty's self she is
When all her robes are gone.

[1] By permission of Ellis & Elvey (Cr 8vo Price 6s)



DOVER BEACH

From a painting by J. M. W Turner

DEL TED
प्रा. कॉ. शा. कोषा

DOVER BEACH.[1]

BY MATTHEW ARNOLD

THE sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; — on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone, the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched sand,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægæan, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here, as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

[1] By permission of the Publishers, Macmillan & Co , Ltd.

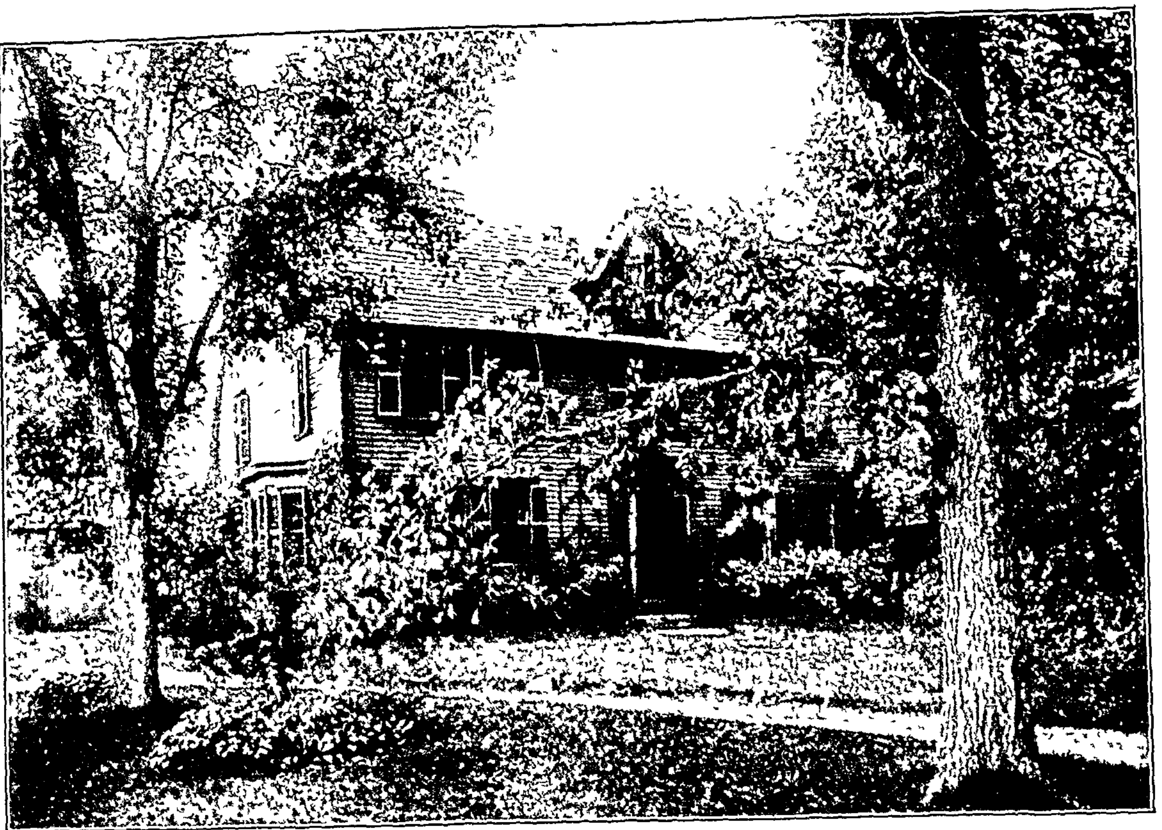
DR. HEIDEGGER'S EXPERIMENT.

By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

THAT very singular man, old Dr. Heidegger, once invited four venerable friends to meet him in his study. There were three white-bearded gentlemen — Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne — and a withered gentlewoman whose name was the widow Wycherly. They were all melancholy old creatures who had been unfortunate in life, and whose greatest misfortune it was that they were not long ago in their graves. Mr. Medbourne, in the vigor of his age, had been a prosperous merchant, but had lost his all by a frantic speculation, and was now little better than a mendicant. Colonel Killigrew had wasted his best years and his health and substance in the pursuit of sinful pleasures which had given birth to a brood of pains, such as the gout and divers other torments of soul and body. Mr. Gascoigne was a ruined politician, a man of evil fame — or, at least, had been so till time had buried him from the knowledge of the present generation and made him obscure instead of infamous. As for the widow Wycherly, tradition tells us that she was a great beauty in her day, but for a long while past she had lived in deep seclusion on account of certain scandalous stories which had prejudiced the gentry of the town against her. It is a circumstance worth mentioning that each of these three old gentlemen — Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne — were early lovers of the widow Wycherly, and had once been on the point of cutting each other's throats for her sake. And before proceeding farther I will merely hint that Dr. Heidegger and all his four guests were sometimes thought to be a little beside themselves, as is not infrequently the case with old people when worried either by present troubles or woeful recollections.

"My dear old friends," said Dr. Heidegger, motioning them to be seated, "I am desirous of your assistance in one of those little experiments with which I amuse myself here in my study."

If all stories were true, Dr. Heidegger's study must have been a very curious place. It was a dim, old-fashioned chamber festooned with cobwebs and besprinkled with antique dust. Around the walls stood several oaken bookcases, the



OLD MANSE, SALEM, MASS, NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S HOME

lower shelves of which were filled with rows of gigantic folios and black-letter quartos, and the upper with little parchment-covered duodecimos. Over the central bookcase was a bronze bust of Hippocrates, with which, according to some authorities, Dr. Heidegger was accustomed to hold consultations in all difficult cases of his practice. In the obscurest corner of the room stood a tall and narrow oaken closet with its door ajar, within which doubtfully appeared a skeleton. Between two of the bookcases hung a looking-glass, presenting its high and dusty plate within a tarnished gilt frame. Among many wonderful stories related of this mirror, it was fabled that the spirits of all the doctor's deceased patients dwelt within its verge and would stare him in the face whenever he looked thitherward. The opposite side of the chamber was ornamented with the full-length portrait of a young lady arrayed in the faded magnificence of silk, satin, and brocade, and with a visage as faded as her dress. Above half a century ago Dr. Heidegger had been on the point of marriage with this young lady, but, being affected with some slight disorder, she had swallowed one of her lover's prescriptions and died on the bridal evening. The greatest curiosity of the study remains to be mentioned: it was a ponderous folio volume bound in black leather, with massive silver clasps. There were no letters on the back, and nobody could tell the title of the book. But it was well known to be a book of magic, and once, when a chambermaid had lifted it merely to brush away the dust, the skeleton had rattled in its closet, the picture of the young lady had stepped one foot upon the floor, and several ghastly faces had peeped forth from the mirror, while the brazen head of Hippocrates frowned and said, "Forbear!"

Such was Dr. Heidegger's study. On the summer afternoon of our tale a small round table as black as ebony stood in the center of the room, sustaining a cut-glass vase of beautiful form and elaborate workmanship. The sunshine came through the window between the heavy festoons of two faded damask curtains and fell directly across this vase; so that a mild splendor was reflected from it on the ashen visages of the five old people who sat around. Four champagne glasses were also on the table.

"My dear old friends," repeated Dr. Heidegger, "may I reckon on your aid in performing an exceedingly curious experiment?"

Now, Dr. Heidegger was a very strange old gentleman whose eccentricity had become the nucleus for a thousand fantastic stories. Some of these fables — to my shame be it spoken — might possibly be traced back to mine own veracious self; and if any passages of the present tale should startle the reader's faith, I must be content to bear the stigma of a fiction monger.

When the doctor's four guests heard him talk of his proposed experiment, they anticipated nothing more wonderful than the murder of a mouse in an air pump or the examination of a cobweb by the microscope, or some similar nonsense with which he was constantly in the habit of pestering his inmates. But without waiting for a reply Dr. Heidegger hobbled across the chamber, and returned with the same ponderous folio bound in black leather which common report affirmed to be a book of magic. Undoing the silver clasps, he opened the volume and took from among its black-letter pages a rose, or what was once a rose, though now the green leaves and crimson petals had assumed one brownish hue and the ancient flower seemed ready to crumble to dust in the doctor's hands.

"This rose," said Dr. Heidegger, with a sigh — "this same withered and crumbling flower — blossomed five and fifty years ago. It was given me by Sylvia Ward, whose portrait hangs yonder, and I meant to wear it in my bosom at our wedding. Five and fifty years it has been treasured between the leaves of this old volume. Now would you deem it possible that this rose of half a century could ever bloom again?"

"Nonsense!" said the widow Wycherly, with a peevish toss of her head. "You might as well ask whether an old woman's wrinkled face could ever bloom again."

"See!" answered Dr. Heidegger. He uncovered the vase and threw the faded rose into the water which it contained. At first it lay lightly on the surface of the fluid, appearing to imbibe none of its moisture. Soon, however, a singular change began to be visible. The crushed and dried petals stirred and assumed a deepening tinge of crimson, as if the flower were reviving from a deathlike slumber, the slender stalk and twigs of foliage became green, and there was the rose of half a century, looking as fresh as when Sylvia Ward had first given it to her lover. It was scarcely full blown, for some of its delicate red leaves curled modestly around its moist bosom, within which two or three dewdrops were sparkling.

"That is certainly a very pretty deception," said the doctor's friends—carelessly, however, for they had witnessed greater miracles at a conjurer's show. "Pray, how was it effected?"

"Did you never hear of the Fountain of Youth?" asked Dr. Heidegger, "which Ponce de Leon, the Spanish adventurer, went in search of two or three centuries ago?"

"But did Ponce de Leon ever find it?" said the widow Wycherly.

"No," answered Dr. Heidegger, "for he never sought it in the right place. The famous Fountain of Youth, if I am rightly informed, is situated in the southern part of the Floridian peninsula, not far from Lake Macaco. Its source is overshadowed by several gigantic magnolias, which, though numberless centuries old, have been kept as fresh as violets by the virtues of this wonderful water. An acquaintance of mine, knowing my curiosity in such matters, has sent me what you see in the vase."

"Ahem!" said Colonel Killigrew, who believed not a word of the doctor's story; "and what may be the effect of this fluid on the human frame?"

"You shall judge for yourself, my dear colonel," replied Dr. Heidegger.—"And all of you, my respected friends, are welcome to so much of this admirable fluid as may restore to you the bloom of youth. For my own part, having had much trouble in growing old, I am in no hurry to grow young again. With your permission, therefore, I will merely watch the progress of the experiment."

While he spoke, Dr. Heidegger had been filling the four champagne glasses with the water of the Fountain of Youth. It was apparently impregnated with an effervescent gas, for little bubbles were continually ascending from the depths of the glasses and bursting in silvery spray at the surface. As the liquor diffused a pleasant perfume, the old people doubted not that it possessed cordial and comfortable properties, and, though utter skeptics as to its rejuvenescent power, they were inclined to swallow it at once. But Dr. Heidegger besought them to stay a moment.

"Before you drink, my respectable old friends," said he, "it would be well that, with the experience of a lifetime to direct you, you should draw up a few general rules for your guidance in passing a second time through the perils of youth.

Think what a sin and shame it would be if, with your peculiar advantages, you should not become patterns of virtue and wisdom to all the young people of the age!"

The doctor's four venerable friends made him no answer except by a feeble and tremulous laugh, so very ridiculous was the idea that, knowing how closely Repentance treads behind the steps of Error, they should ever go astray again.

"Drink, then," said the doctor, bowing; "I rejoice that I have so well selected the subjects of my experiment."

With palsied hands they raised the glasses to their lips. The liquor, if it really possessed such virtues as Dr. Heidegger imputed to it, could not have been bestowed on four human beings who needed it more woefully. They looked as if they had never known what youth or pleasure was, but had been the offspring of Nature's dotage, and always the gray, decrepit, sapless, miserable creatures who now sat stooping round the doctor's table without life enough in their souls or bodies to be animated even by the prospect of growing young again. They drank off the water and replaced their glasses on the table.

Assuredly, there was an almost immediate improvement in the aspect of the party — not unlike what might have been produced by a glass of generous wine — together with a sudden glow of cheerful sunshine, brightening over all their visages at once. There was a healthful suffusion on their cheeks instead of the ashen hue that had made them look so corpselike. They gazed at one another, and fancied that some magic power had really begun to smooth away the deep and sad inscriptions which Father Time had been so long engraving on their brows. The widow Wycherly adjusted her cap, for she felt almost like a woman again.

"Give us more of this wondrous water," cried they, eagerly. "We are younger, but we are still too old. Quick! give us more!"

"Patience, patience!" quoth Dr. Heidegger, who sat watching the experiment with philosophic coolness. "You have been a long time growing old; surely you might be content to grow young in half an hour. But the water is at your service." Again he filled their glasses with the liquor of youth, enough of which still remained in the vase to turn half the old people in the city to the age of their own grandchildren.

While the bubbles were yet sparkling on the brim, the doctor's four guests snatched their glasses from the table and

swallowed the contents at a single gulp. Was it delusion? Even while the draught was passing down their throats it seemed to have wrought a change on their whole systems. Their eyes grew clear and bright; a dark shade deepened among their silvery locks: they sat around the table three gentlemen of middle age and a woman hardly beyond her buxom prime.

"My dear widow, you are charming!" cried Colonel Killigrew, whose eyes had been fixed upon her face while the shadows of age were flitting from it like darkness from the crimson daybreak.

The fair widow knew of old that Colonel Killigrew's compliments were not always measured by sober truth; so she started up and ran to the mirror, still dreading that the ugly visage of an old woman would meet her gaze.

Meanwhile, the three gentlemen behaved in such a manner as proved that the water of the Fountain of Youth possessed some intoxicating qualities — unless, indeed, their exhilaration of spirits were merely a lightsome dizziness caused by the sudden removal of the weight of years. Mr. Gascoigne's mind seemed to run on political topics, but whether relating to the past, present, or future could not easily be determined, since the same ideas and phrases have been in vogue these fifty years. Now he rattled forth full-throated sentences about patriotism, national glory, and the people's right; now he muttered some perilous stuff or other in a sly and doubtful whisper, so cautiously that even his own conscience could scarcely catch the secret; and now, again, he spoke in measured accents and a deeply deferential tone, as if a royal ear were listening to his well-turned periods. Colonel Killigrew all this time had been trolling forth a jolly bottle song and ringing his glass in symphony with the chorus, while his eyes wandered toward the buxom figure of the widow Wycherly. On the other side of the table, Mr. Medbourne was involved in a calculation of dollars and cents with which was strangely intermingled a project for supplying the East Indies with ice by harnessing a team of whales to the polar icebergs. As for the widow Wycherly, she stood before the mirror courtesying and simpering to her own image and greeting it as the friend whom she loved better than all the world besides. She thrust her face close to the glass to see whether some long-remembered wrinkle or crow's foot had indeed vanished; she examined whether the

Dr. Heidegger. Then all shouted mirthfully and leaped about the room.

The widow Wycherly—if so fresh a damsel could be called a widow—tripped up to the doctor's chair with a mischievous merriment in her rosy face.

"Doctor, you dear old soul," cried she, "get up and dance with me;" and then the four young people laughed louder than ever to think what a queer figure the poor old doctor would cut.

"Pray excuse me," answered the doctor, quietly. "I am old and rheumatic, and my dancing days were over long ago. But either of these gay young gentlemen will be glad of so pretty a partner."

"Dance with me, Clara," cried Colonel Killigrew.

"No, no! I will be her partner," shouted Mr. Gascoigne.

"She promised me her hand fifty years ago," exclaimed Mr. Medbourne.

They all gathered round her. One caught both her hands in his passionate grasp, another threw his arm about her waist, the third buried his hand among the glossy curls that clustered beneath the widow's cap. Blushing, panting, struggling, chiding, laughing, her warm breath fanning each of their faces by turns, she strove to disengage herself, yet still remained in their triple embrace. Never was there a livelier picture of youthful rivalship, with bewitching beauty for the prize. Yet, by a strange deception, owing to the duskiness of the chamber and the antique dresses which they still wore, the tall mirror is said to have reflected the figures of the three old, gray, withered grandsires ridiculously contending for the skinny ugliness of a shriveled grandma. But they were young: their burning passions proved them so.

Inflamed to madness by the coquetry of the girl widow, who neither granted nor quite withheld her favors, the three rivals began to interchange threatening glances. Still keeping hold of the fair prize, they grappled fiercely at one another's throats. As they struggled to and fro the table was overturned and the vase dashed into a thousand fragments. The precious Water of Youth flowed in a bright stream across the floor, moistening the wings of a butterfly which, grown old in the decline of summer, had alighted there to die. The insect fluttered lightly through the chamber and settled on the snowy head of Dr. Heidegger.

"Come, come, gentlemen! Come, Madam Wycherly!" exclaimed the doctor. "I really must protest against this riot."

They stood still and shivered, for it seemed as if gray Time were calling them back from their sunny youth far down into the chill and darksome vale of years. They looked at old Dr. Heidegger, who sat in his carved armchair holding the rose of half a century, which he had rescued from among the fragments of the shattered vase. At the motion of his hand the four rioters resumed their seats—the more readily because their violent exertions had wearied them, youthful though they were.

"My poor Sylvia's rose!" ejaculated Dr. Heidegger, holding it in the light of the sunset clouds. "It appears to be fading again."

And so it was. Even while the party were looking at it the flower continued to shrivel up, till it became as dry and fragile as when the doctor had first thrown it into the vase. He shook off the few drops of moisture which clung to its petals.

"I love it as well thus as in its dewy freshness," observed he, pressing the withered rose to his withered lips.

While he spoke the butterfly fluttered down from the doctor's snowy head and fell upon the floor. His guests shivered again. A strange chillness—whether of the body or spirit they could not tell—was creeping gradually over them all. They gazed at one another, and fancied that each fleeting moment snatched away a charm and left a deepening furrow where none had been before. Was it an illusion? Had the changes of a lifetime been crowded into so brief a space, and were they now four aged people sitting with their old friend Dr. Heidegger?

"Are we grown old again so soon?" cried they, dolefully.

In truth, they had. The Water of Youth possessed merely a virtue more transient than that of wine; the delirium which it created had effervesced away. Yes, they were old again. With a shuddering impulse that showed her a woman still, the widow clasped her skinny hands before her face and wished that the coffin lid were over it, since it could be no longer beautiful.

"Yes, friends, ye are old again," said Dr. Heidegger, "and, lo! the Water of Youth is all lavished on the ground. Well, I bemoan it not; for if the fountain gushed at my very doorstep, I would not stoop to bathe my lips in it—no, though its delirium were for years instead of moments. Such is the lesson ye have taught me."



MARCO BOZZARIS



MARCO BOZZARIS

But the doctor's four friends had taught no such lesson to themselves. They resolved forthwith to make a pilgrimage to Florida and quaff at morning, noon, and night from the Fountain of Youth.



MARCO BOZZARIS.

By FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

[FITZ-GREENE HALLECK, American poet, was born in Guilford, Conn, July 8, 1790; became a mercantile accountant, devoting his leisure to poetry. In 1811 he removed to New York, remaining till 1849, when he retired to his native town on a small annuity left him by John Jacob Astor; and died there November 19, 1867 He wrote the "Croaker" papers with Joseph Rodman Drake from 1819 on; "Fanny," a social satire, 1819; "Alnwick Castle" and "Burns," after a visit to Europe in 1821; and "Marco Bozzaris" about the same time]

At midnight, in his guarded tent,
The Turk was dreaming of the hour
When Greece, her knee in suppliance bent,
Should tremble at his power,
In dreams, through camp and court he bore
The trophies of a conqueror;
In dreams, his song of triumph heard;
Then wore his monarch's signet ring;
Then pressed that monarch's throne—a king:
As wild his thoughts, and gay of wing,
As Eden's garden bird.

At midnight, in the forest shades,
Bozzaris ranged his Suliote band,
True as the steel of their tried blades,
Heroes in heart and hand.
There had the Persian's thousands stood,
There had the glad earth drunk their blood,
On old Platæa's day;
And now there breathed that haunted air
The sons of sires who conquered there,
With arm to strike, and soul to dare,
As quick, as far, as they.

An hour passed on—the Turk awoke:
That bright dream was his last.
He woke—to hear his sentries shriek,
"To arms! they come! the Greek! the Greek!"

He woke — to die midst flame and smoke,
And shout, and groan, and saber stroke,
And death shots falling thick and fast
As lightnings from the mountain cloud;
And heard, with voice as trumpet loud,
Bozzaris cheer his band:
"Strike — till the last armed foe expires;
Strike — for your altars and your fires;
Strike — for the green graves of your sires,
God — and your native land!"

They fought — like brave men, long and well;
They piled that ground with Moslem slain;
They conquered — but Bozzaris fell,
Bleeding at every vein.
His few surviving comrades saw
His smile when rang their proud hurrah,
And the red field was won;
Then saw in death his eyelids close
Calmly, as to a night's repose,
Like flowers at set of sun.

Come to the bridal chamber, Death!
Come to the mother's, when she feels
For the first time her firstborn's breath;
Come when the blessed seals
That close the pestilence are broke,
And crowded cities wail its stroke;
Come in consumption's ghastly form,
The earthquake shock, the ocean storm;
Come when the heart beats high and warm
With banquet song, and dance, and wine; —
And thou art terrible — the tear,
The groan, the knell, the pall, the bier,
And all we know, or dream, or fear
Of agony, are thine.

But to the hero, when his sword
Has won the battle for the free,
Thy voice sounds like a prophet's word;
And in its hollow tones are heard
The thanks of millions yet to be.
Come when his task of fame is wrought —
Come with her laurel leaf, blood-bought —

Come in her crowning hour—and then
Thy sunken eye's unearthly light
To him is welcome as the sight
Of sky and stars to prisoned men:
Thy grasp is welcome as the hand
Of brother in a foreign land;
Thy summons welcome as the cry
That told the Indian isles were nigh,
To the world-seeking Genoese,
When the land wind, from woods of palm,
And orange groves, and fields of balm,
Blew o'er the Haytian seas.

Bozzaris! with the storied brave
Greece nurtured in her glory's time,
Rest thee—there is no prouder grave,
Even in her own proud clime.
She wore no funeral weeds for thee,
Nor bade the dark hearse wave its plume
Like torn branch from death's leafless tree
In sorrow's pomp and pageantry,
The heartless luxury of the tomb·
But she remembers thee as one
Long loved and for a season gone;
For thee her poet's lyre is wreathed,
Her marble wrought, her music breathed;
For thee she rings the birthday bells;
Of thee her babe's first lisping tells,
For thine her evening prayer is said
At palace couch and cottage bed;
Her soldier, closing with the foe,
Gives for thy sake a deadlier blow;
His plighted maiden, when she fears
For him the joy of her young years,
Thinks of thy fate, and checks her tears;
And she, the mother of thy boys,
Though in her eye and faded cheek
Is read the grief she will not speak,
The memory of her buried joys,
And even she who gave thee birth
Will, by their pilgrim-circled hearth,
Talk of thy doom without a sigh:
For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's;
One of the few, the immortal names
That were not born to die.

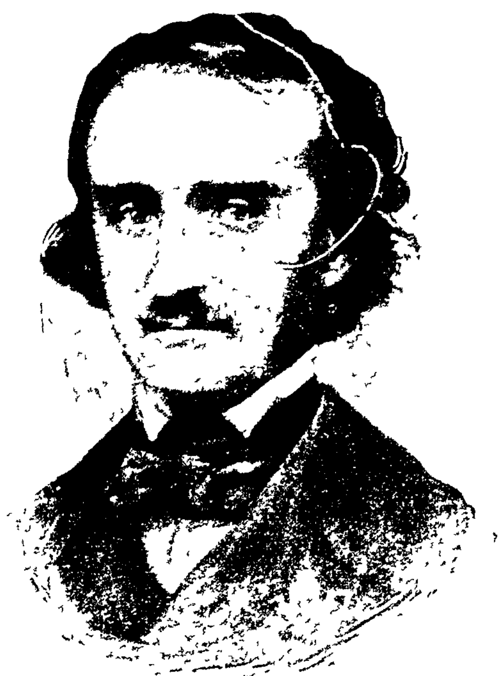
WILLIAM WILSON.

By EDGAR A. POE

[EDGAR ALLAN POE. An American poet and author; born at Boston, Mass., 1809. Orphaned in his third year, he was adopted by John Allan, a wealthy merchant of Richmond, Va., by whom he was sent to school at Stoke-Newington, near London He spent a year at the University of Virginia (1826); enlisted as a private in the United States army under an assumed name, becoming sergeant major (1829); and was admitted to West Point (1830), receiving his dismissal the next year. Thrown upon his own resources, he began writing for the papers. Subsequently he became editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, in Richmond, was on the staff of *The Gentleman's Magazine* and *Graham's Magazine*, in Philadelphia, and the *Broadway Journal* in New York. He died in a Baltimore hospital, October 7, 1849 "The Raven" and "The Bells" are his most popular poems. His fame as a prose writer rests on his tales of terror and mystery.]

LET me call myself, for the present, William Wilson. The fair page now lying before me need not be sullied with my real appellation. This has been already too much an object for the scorn, for the horror, for the detestation of my race. To the uttermost regions of the globe have not the indignant winds bruited its unparalleled infamy? O outcast of all outcasts most abandoned! to the earth art thou not forever dead? to its honors, to its flowers, to its golden aspirations?—and a cloud, dense, dismal, and limitless, does it not hang eternally between thy hopes and heaven?

I would not, if I could, here or to-day, embody a record of my later years of unspeakable misery and unpardonable crime. This epoch—these later years—took unto themselves a sudden elevation in turpitude, whose origin alone it is my present purpose to assign. Men usually grow base by degrees. From me in an instant all virtue dropped bodily as a mantle. From comparatively trivial wickedness I passed, with the stride of a giant, into more than the enormities of an Elagabalus. What chance—what one event brought this evil thing to pass, bear with me while I relate. Death approaches, and the shadow which foreruns him has thrown a softening influence over my spirit. I long in passing through the dim valley for the sympathy, I had nearly said for the pity, of my fellow-men. I would fain have them believe that I have been in some measure the slave of circumstances beyond human control. I would wish them to seek out for me, in the details I am about



EDGAR ALLAN POE

to give, some little oasis of *fatality* amid a wilderness of error. I would have them allow, what they cannot refrain from allowing, that although temptation may have erewhile existed as great, man was never *thus* at least tempted before, certainly never *thus* fell. And is it therefore that he has never thus suffered? Have I not indeed been living in a dream? And am I not now dying a victim to the horror and the mystery of the wildest of all sublunary visions?

I am the descendant of a race whose imaginative and easily excitable temperament has at all times rendered them remarkable; and in my earliest infancy I gave evidence of having fully inherited the family character. As I advanced in years it was more strongly developed, becoming for many reasons a cause of serious disquietude to my friends, and of positive injury to myself. I grew self-willed, addicted to the wildest caprices, and a prey to the most ungovernable passions. Weak-minded, and beset with constitutional infirmities akin to my own, my parents could do but little to check the evil propensities which distinguished me. Some feeble and ill-directed efforts resulted in complete failure on their part, and of course in total triumph on mine. Thenceforward my voice was a household law, and at an age when few children have abandoned their leading strings, I was left to the guidance of my own will, and became in all but name the master of my own actions.

My earliest recollections of a school life are connected with a large rambling Elizabethan house, in a misty-looking village of England, where were a vast number of gigantic and gnarled trees, and where all the houses were excessively ancient. In truth, it was a dreamlike and spirit-soothing place, that venerable old town. At this moment, in fancy, I feel the refreshing chilliness of its deeply shadowed avenues, inhale the fragrance of its thousand shrubberies, and thrill anew with indefinable delight at the deep hollow note of the church bell, breaking each hour with sullen and sudden roar upon the stillness of the dusky atmosphere in which the fretted Gothic steeple lay imbedded and asleep.

It gives me perhaps as much of pleasure as I can now in any manner experience to dwell upon minute recollections of the school and its concerns. Steeped in misery as I am — misery, alas! only too real — I shall be pardoned for seeking relief, however slight and temporary, in the weakness of a few

having called for us, we joyfully took our way home for the Christmas or Midsummer holidays.

But the house! — how quaint an old building was this! to me how veritably a palace of enchantment! There was really no end to its windings, to its incomprehensible subdivisions. It was difficult, at any given time, to say with certainty upon which of its two stories one happened to be. From each room to every other there were sure to be found three or four steps either in ascent or descent. Then the lateral branches were innumerable, inconceivable, and so returning in upon themselves that our most exact ideas in regard to the whole mansion were not very far different from those with which we pondered upon infinity. During the five years of my residence here I was never able to ascertain with precision in what remote locality lay the little sleeping apartment assigned to myself and some eighteen or twenty other scholars.

The schoolroom was the largest in the house, — I could not help thinking, in the world. It was very long, narrow, and dismally low, with pointed Gothic windows and a ceiling of oak. In a remote and terror-inspiring angle was a square inclosure of eight or ten feet, comprising the *sanctum*, "during hours," of our principal, the Reverend Dr. Bransby. It was a solid structure, with massy door, sooner than open which in the absence of the "dominie" we would all have willingly perished by the *peine forte et dure.* In other angles were two other similar boxes, far less reverenced, indeed, but still greatly matters of awe. One of these was the pulpit of the "classical" usher, one of the "English and mathematical." Interspersed about the room, crossing and recrossing in endless irregularity, were innumerable benches and desks, black, ancient, and timeworn, piled desperately with much-bethumbed books, and so beseamed with initial letters, names at full length, grotesque figures, and other multiplied efforts of the knife, as to have entirely lost what little of original form might have been their portion in days long departed. A huge bucket with water stood at one extremity of the room, and a clock of stupendous dimensions at the other.

Encompassed by the massy walls of this venerable academy, I passed, yet not in a tedium or disgust, the years of the third lustrum of my life. The teeming brain of childhood requires no external world of incident to occupy or amuse it; and the apparently dismal monotony of a school was replete with more

intense excitement than my riper youth has derived from luxury, or my full manhood from crime. Yet I must believe that my first mental development had in it much of the uncommon — even much of the *outré*. Upon mankind at large the events of very early existence rarely leave in mature age any definite impression. All is gray shadow — a weak and irregular remembrance — an indistinct regathering of feeble pleasures and phantasmagoric pains. With me this is not so. In childhood I must have felt with the energy of a man what I now find stamped upon memory in lines as vivid, as deep, and as durable as the *exergues* of the Carthaginian medals.

Yet in fact — in the fact of the world's view — how little was there to remember! The morning's awakening, the nightly summons to bed; the connings, the recitations; the periodical half-holidays, and perambulations; the playground, with its broils, its pastimes, its intrigues; — these, by a mental sorcery long forgotten, were made to involve a wilderness of sensation, a world of rich incident, a universe of varied emotion, of excitement the most passionate and spirit-stirring. "*O le bon temps, que ce siècle de fer!*"

In truth, the ardor, the enthusiasm, and the imperiousness of my disposition, soon rendered me a marked character among my schoolmates, and by slow but natural gradations gave me an ascendency over all not greatly older than myself — over all with a single exception. This exception was found in the person of a scholar who, although no relation, bore the same Christian and surname as myself, — a circumstance, in fact, little remarkable; for notwithstanding a noble descent, mine was one of those everyday appellations which seem, by prescriptive right, to have been, time out of mind, the common property of the mob. In this narrative I have therefore designated myself as William Wilson — a fictitious title not very dissimilar to the real. My namesake alone, of those who in school phraseology constituted "our set," presumed to compete with me in the studies of the class — in the sports and broils of the playground — to refuse implicit belief in my assertions, and submission to my will — indeed, to interfere with my arbitrary dictation in any respect whatsoever. If there is on earth a supreme and unqualified despotism, it is the despotism of the master mind in boyhood over the less energetic spirits of his companions.

Wilson's rebellion was to me a source of the greatest embarrassment: the more so as, in spite of the bravado with which in

public I made a point of treating him and his pretensions, I secretly felt that I feared him, and could not help thinking the equality which he maintained so easily with myself a proof of his true superiority, since not to be overcome cost me a perpetual struggle. Yet this superiority — even this equality — was in truth acknowledged by no one but myself; our associates, by some unaccountable blindness, seemed not even to suspect it. Indeed, his competition, his resistance, and especially his impertinent and dogged interference with my purposes, were not more pointed than private. He appeared to be destitute alike of the ambition which urged, and of the passionate energy of mind which enabled me to excel. In this rivalry he might have been supposed actuated solely by a whimsical desire to thwart, astonish, or mortify myself; although there were times when I could not help observing, with a feeling made up of wonder, abasement, and pique, that he mingled with his injuries, his insults, or his contradictions a certain most inappropriate, and assuredly most unwelcome, *affectionateness* of manner. I could only conceive this singular behavior to arise from a consummate self-conceit assuming the vulgar airs of patronage and protection.

Perhaps it was this latter trait in Wilson's conduct, conjoined with our identity of name, and the mere accident of our having entered the school upon the same day, which set afloat the notion that we were brothers, among the senior classes in the academy. These do not usually inquire with much strictness into the affairs of their juniors. I have before said, or should have said, that Wilson was not, in the most remote degree, connected with my family. But assuredly if we *had* been brothers we must have been twins; for, after leaving Dr. Bransby's, I casually learned that my namesake was born on the nineteenth of January, 1813 — and this is a somewhat remarkable coincidence, for the day is precisely that of my own nativity.

It may seem strange that in spite of the continual anxiety occasioned me by the rivalry of Wilson, and his intolerable spirit of contradiction, I could not bring myself to hate him altogether. We had, to be sure, nearly every day a quarrel, in which, yielding me publicly the palm of victory, he in some manner contrived to make me feel that it was he who had deserved it; yet a sense of pride on my part and a veritable dignity on his own kept us always upon what are called "speaking terms," while there were many points of strong congeniality in our tempers, operating to awake in me a sentiment which our

position alone, perhaps, prevented from ripening into friendship. It is difficult indeed to define or even to describe my real feelings towards him. They formed a motley and heterogeneous admixture; some petulant animosity, which was not yet hatred, some esteem, more respect, much fear, with a world of uneasy curiosity. To the moralist it will be unnecessary to say in addition that Wilson and myself were the most inseparable of companions.

It was no doubt the anomalous state of affairs existing between us which turned all my attacks upon him (and they were many, either open or covert) into the channel of banter or practical joke (giving pain while assuming the aspect of mere fun), rather than into a more serious and determined hostility. But my endeavors on this head were by no means uniformly successful, even when my plans were the most wittily concocted; for my namesake had much about him in character of that unassuming and quiet austerity which, while enjoying the poignancy of its own jokes, has no heel of Achilles in itself, and absolutely refuses to be laughed at. I could find indeed but one vulnerable point, and that lying in a personal peculiarity, arising perhaps from constitutional disease, would have been spared by any antagonist less at his wit's end than myself: my rival had a weakness in the faucial or guttural organs which precluded him from raising his voice at any time *above a very low whisper*. Of this defect I did not fail to take what poor advantage lay in my power.

Wilson's retaliations in kind were many; and there was one form of his practical wit that disturbed me beyond measure. How his sagacity first discovered at all that so petty a thing would vex me is a question I never could solve, but having discovered, he habitually practiced the annoyance. I had always felt aversion to my uncourtly patronymic and its very common, if not plebeian, prænomen. The words were venom in my ears; and when, upon the day of my arrival, a second William Wilson came also to the academy, I felt angry with him for bearing the name, and doubly disgusted with the name because a stranger bore it, who would be the cause of its twofold repetition, who would be constantly in my presence, and whose concerns, in the ordinary routine of the school business, must inevitably, on account of the detestable coincidence, be often confounded with my own.

The feeling of vexation thus engendered grew stronger with

every circumstance tending to show resemblance, moral or physical, between my rival and myself. I had not then discovered the remarkable fact that we were of the same age; but I saw that we were of the same height, and I perceived that we were even singularly alike in general contour of person and outline of feature. I was galled, too, by the rumor touching a relationship, which had grown current in the upper forms. In a word, nothing could more seriously disturb me (although I scrupulously concealed such disturbance) than any allusion to a similarity of mind, person, or condition existing between us. But, in truth, I had no reason to believe that (with the exception of the matter of relationship, and in the case of Wilson himself) this similarity had ever been made a subject of comment, or even observed at all, by our schoolfellows. That *he* observed it in all its bearings, and as fixedly as I, was apparent; but that he could discover in such circumstances so fruitful a field of annoyance can only be attributed, as I said before, to his more than ordinary penetration.

His cue, which was to perfect an imitation of myself, lay both in words and in actions, and most admirably did he play his part. My dress it was an easy matter to copy; my gait and general manner were without difficulty appropriated; in spite of his constitutional defect, even my voice did not escape him. My louder tones were of course unattempted, but then the key, it was identical; *and his singular whisper, it grew the very echo of my own.*

How greatly this most exquisite portraiture harassed me (for it could not justly be termed a caricature), I will not now venture to describe. I had but one consolation — in the fact that the imitation, apparently, was noticed by myself alone, and that I had to endure only the knowing and strangely sarcastic smiles of my namesake himself. Satisfied with having produced in my bosom the intended effect, he seemed to chuckle in secret over the sting he had inflicted, and was characteristically disregardful of the public applause which the success of his witty endeavors might have so easily elicited. That the school, indeed, did not feel his design, perceive its accomplishment, and participate in his sneer, was for many anxious months a riddle I could not resolve. Perhaps the *gradation* of his copy rendered it not so readily perceptible, or more possibly I owed my security to the masterly air of the copyist, who, disdaining the letter (which in a painting is all the obtuse can

see), gave but the full spirit of his original for my individual contemplation and chagrin.

I have already more than once spoken of the disgusting air of patronage which he assumed toward me, and of his frequent officious interference with my will. This interference often took the ungracious character of advice — advice not openly given, but hinted or insinuated. I received it with a repugnance which gained strength as I grew in years. Yet at this distant day, let me do him the simple justice to acknowledge that I can recall no occasion when the suggestions of my rival were on the side of those errors or follies so usual to his immature age and seeming inexperience; that his moral sense, at least, if not his general talents and worldly wisdom, was far keener than my own; and that I might to-day have been a better, and thus a happier man, had I less frequently rejected the counsels embodied in those meaning whispers which I then but too cordially hated and too bitterly despised.

As it was, I at length grew restive in the extreme under his distasteful supervision, and daily resented more and more openly what I considered his intolerable arrogance. I have said that in the first years of our connection as schoolmates, my feelings in regard to him might have been easily ripened into friendship; but, in the latter months of my residence at the academy, although the intrusion of his ordinary manner had, beyond doubt, in some measure abated, my sentiments in nearly similar proportion partook very much of positive hatred. Upon one occasion he saw this, I think, and afterwards avoided, or made a show of avoiding me.

It was about the same period, if I remember aright, that, in an altercation of violence with him, in which he was more than usually thrown off his guard, and spoke and acted with an openness of demeanor rather foreign to his nature, I discovered, or fancied I discovered, in his accent, his air, and general appearance, a something which first startled, and then deeply interested me, by bringing to mind dim visions of my earliest infancy — wild, confused, and thronging memories of a time when memory herself was yet unborn. I cannot better describe the sensation which oppressed me than by saying that I could with difficulty shake off the belief of my having been acquainted with the being who stood before me at some epoch very long ago, some point of the past even infinitely remote. The delusion, however, faded rapidly as it came, and I mention

it at all but to define the day of the last conversation I there held with my singular namesake.

The huge old house, with its countless subdivisions, had several large chambers communicating with each other, where slept the greater number of the students. There were, however (as must necessarily happen in a building so awkwardly planned), many little nooks or recesses, the odds and ends of the structure, and these the economic ingenuity of Dr. Bransby had also fitted up as dormitories, although, being the merest closets, they were capable of accommodating but a single individual. One of these small apartments was occupied by Wilson.

One night, about the close of my fifth year at the school, and immediately after the altercation just mentioned, finding every one wrapped in sleep, I arose from bed, and, lamp in hand, stole through a wilderness of narrow passages from my own bedroom to that of my rival. I had long been plotting one of those ill-natured pieces of practical wit at his expense in which I had hitherto been so uniformly unsuccessful. It was my intention now to put my scheme in operation, and I resolved to make him feel the whole extent of the malice with which I was imbued. Having reached his closet, I noiselessly entered, leaving the lamp, with a shade over it, on the outside. I advanced a step, and listened to the sound of his tranquil breathing. Assured of his being asleep, I returned, took the light, and with it again approached the bed. Close curtains were around it, which, in the prosecution of my plan, I slowly and quietly withdrew, when the bright rays fell vividly upon the sleeper, and my eyes, at the same moment, upon his countenance. I looked, and a numbness, an iciness of feeling, instantly pervaded my frame. My breast heaved, my knees tottered, my whole spirit became possessed with an objectless yet intolerable horror. Gasping for breath, I lowered the lamp in still nearer proximity to the face. Were these—*these* the lineaments of William Wilson? I saw, indeed, that they were his, but I shook as if with a fit of the ague in fancying they were not. What *was* there about them to confound me in this manner? I gazed, while my brain reeled with a multitude of incoherent thoughts. Not thus he appeared, assuredly not *thus*, in the vivacity of his waking hours. The same name, the same contour of person, the same day of arrival at the academy; and then his dogged and meaningless imitation of my gait, my voice, my habits, and my manner. Was it, in truth, within the bounds of human

expenditure with the haughtiest heirs of the wealthiest earldoms in Great Britain.

Excited by such appliances to vice, my constitutional temperament broke forth with redoubled ardor, and I spurned even the common restraints of decency in the mad infatuation of my revels. But it were absurd to pause in the detail of my extravagance. Let it suffice that among spendthrifts I out-Heroded Herod, and that giving name to a multitude of novel follies, I added no brief appendix to the long catalogue of vices then usual in the most dissolute university of Europe.

It could hardly be credited, however, that I had, even here, so utterly fallen from the gentlemanly estate as to seek acquaintance with the vilest arts of the gambler by profession, and having become an adept in his despicable science, to practice it habitually as a means of increasing my already enormous income at the expense of the weak-minded among my fellow-collegians. Such, nevertheless, was the fact; and the very enormity of this offense against all manly and honorable sentiment proved, beyond doubt, the main, if not the sole reason of the impunity with which it was committed. Who, indeed, among my most abandoned associates would not rather have disputed the clearest evidence of his senses than have suspected of such courses the gay, the frank, the generous William Wilson — the noblest and most liberal commoner at Oxford — him whose follies (said his parasites) were but the follies of youth and unbridled fancy — whose errors but inimitable whim — whose darkest vice but a careless and dashing extravagance?

I had been now two years successfully busied in this way when there came to the university a young *parvenu* nobleman, Glendinning — rich, said report, as Herodes Atticus — his riches, too, as easily acquired. I soon found him of weak intellect and of course marked him as a fitting subject for my skill. I frequently engaged him in play, and contrived with the gambler's usual art to let him win considerable sums, the more effectually to entangle him in my snares. At length, my schemes being ripe, I met him (with the full intention that this meeting should be final and decisive) at the chambers of a fellow-commoner (Mr. Preston) equally intimate with both, but who, to do him justice, entertained not even a remote suspicion of my design. To give to this a better coloring I had contrived to have assembled a party of some eight or ten, and was solicitously careful that the introduction of cards should appear accidental.

and originate in the proposal of my contemplated dupe himself. To be brief upon a vile topic, none of the low finesse was omitted, so customary upon similar occasions that it is a just matter for wonder how any are still found so besotted as to fall its victim.

We had protracted our sitting far into the night, and I had at length effected the maneuver of getting Glendinning as my sole antagonist. The game, too, was my favorite *écarté*. The rest of the company, interested in the extent of our play, had abandoned their own cards, and were standing around us as spectators. The *parvenu*, who had been induced by my artifices in the early part of the evening to drink deeply, now shuffled, dealt, or played with a wild nervousness of manner for which his intoxication, I thought, might partially but could not altogether account. In a very short period he had become my debtor to a large amount, when, having taken a long draught of port, he did precisely what I had been coolly anticipating—he proposed to double our already extravagant stakes. With a well-feigned show of reluctance, and not until after my repeated refusal had seduced him into some angry words which gave a color of *pique* to my compliance, did I finally comply. The result of course did but prove how entirely the prey was in my toils: in less than an hour he had quadrupled his debt. For some time his countenance had been losing the florid tinge lent it by the wine, but now, to my astonishment, I perceived that it had grown to a pallor truly fearful. I say to my astonishment. Glendinning had been represented to my eager inquiries as immeasurably wealthy; and the sums which he had as yet lost, although in themselves vast, could not, I supposed, very seriously annoy, much less so violently affect him. That he was overcome by the wine just swallowed was the idea which most readily presented itself; and, rather with a view to the preservation of my own character in the eyes of my associates, than from any less interested motive, I was about to insist peremptorily upon a discontinuance of the play, when some expressions at my elbow from among the company, and an ejaculation evincing utter despair on the part of Glendinning, gave me to understand that I had effected his total ruin under circumstances which, rendering him an object for the pity of all, should have protected him from the ill offices even of a fiend.

What now might have been my conduct it is difficult to say. The pitiable condition of my dupe had thrown an air of embar-

rassed gloom over all, and for some moments a profound silence was maintained, during which I could not help feeling my cheeks tingle with the many burning glances of scorn or reproach cast upon me by the less abandoned of the party. I will even own that an intolerable weight of anxiety was a brief instant lifted from my bosom by the sudden and extraordinary interruption which ensued. The wide heavy folding doors of the apartment were all at once thrown open to their full extent, with a vigorous and rushing impetuosity that extinguished, as if by magic, every candle in the room. Their light, in dying, enabled us just to perceive that a stranger had entered, about my own height, and closely muffled in a cloak. The darkness, however, was now total, and we could only *feel* that he was standing in our midst. Before any one of us could recover from the extreme astonishment into which this rudeness had thrown all, we heard the voice of the intruder.

"Gentlemen," he said, in a low, distinct, and never-to-be-forgotten *whisper* which thrilled to the very marrow of my bones, "Gentlemen, I make no apology for this behavior, because in thus behaving, I am but fulfilling my duty. You are, beyond doubt, uninformed of the true character of the person who has to-night won at *écarté* a large sum of money from Lord Glendinning. I will therefore put you upon an expeditious and decisive plan of obtaining this very necessary information. Please to examine at your leisure the inner linings of the cuff of his left sleeve, and the several little packages which may be found in the somewhat capacious pockets of his embroidered morning wrapper."

While he spoke, so profound was the stillness that one might have heard a pin drop upon the floor. In ceasing, he departed at once, and as abruptly as he had entered. Can I — shall I describe my sensations? Must I say that I felt all the horrors of the damned? Most assuredly I had little time for reflection. Many hands roughly seized me upon the spot, and lights were immediately reprocured. A search ensued. In the lining of my sleeve were found all the court cards essential in *écarté*, and in the pockets of my wrapper a number of packs, facsimiles of those used at our sittings, with the single exception that mine were of the species called, technically, *arrondées*, — the honors being slightly convex at the ends, the lower cards slightly convex at the sides. In this disposition, the dupe who cuts, as customary, at the length of the pack, will invariably find that

he cuts his antagonist an honor; while the gambler, cutting at the breadth, will as certainly cut nothing for his victim which may count in the records of the game.

Any burst of indignation upon this discovery would have affected me less than the silent contempt, or the sarcastic composure, with which it was received.

"Mr. Wilson," said our host, stooping to remove from beneath his feet an exceedingly luxurious cloak of rare furs, "Mr. Wilson, this is your property." (The weather was cold; and, upon quitting my own room, I had thrown a cloak over my dressing wrapper, putting it off upon reaching the scene of play.) "I presume it is supererogatory to seek here" (eying the folds of the garment with a bitter smile) "for any further evidence of your skill. Indeed, we have had enough. You will see the necessity, I hope, of quitting Oxford — at all events, of quitting instantly my chambers."

Abased, humbled to the dust as I then was, it is probable that I should have resented this galling language by immediate personal violence, had not my whole attention been at the moment arrested by a fact of the most startling character. The cloak which I had worn was of a rare description of fur; how rare, how extravagantly costly, I shall not venture to say. Its fashion, too, was of my own fantastic invention, for I was fastidious to an absurd degree of coxcombry in matters of this frivolous nature. When, therefore, Mr. Preston reached me that which he had picked up upon the floor, and near the folding doors of the apartment, it was with an astonishment nearly bordering upon terror that I perceived my own already hanging on my arm (where I had no doubt unwittingly placed it), and that the one presented me was but its exact counterpart in every, in even the minutest possible particular. The singular being who had so disastrously exposed me had been muffled, I remembered, in a cloak, and none had been worn at all by any of the members of our party with the exception of myself. Retaining some presence of mind, I took the one offered me by Preston, placed it unnoticed over my own, left the apartment with a resolute scowl of defiance, and next morning, ere dawn of day, commenced a hurried journey from Oxford to the Continent in a perfect agony of horror and of shame.

I fled in vain. My evil destiny pursued me as if in exultation, and proved indeed that the exercise of its mysterious dominion had as yet only begun. Scarcely had I set foot in Paris

ere I had fresh evidence of the detestable interest taken by this Wilson in my concerns. Years flew while I experienced no relief. Villain!—at Rome, with how untimely, yet with how spectral an officiousness, stepped he in between me and my ambition! At Vienna, too—at Berlin—and at Moscow! Where, in truth, had I *not* bitter cause to curse him within my heart? From his inscrutable tyranny did I at length flee, panic-stricken, as from a pestilence; and to the very ends of the earth *I fled in vain.*

And again and again, in secret communion with my own spirit, would I demand the questions, "Who is he?—whence came he?—and what are his objects?" But no answer was there found. And now I scrutinized, with a minute scrutiny, the forms, and the methods, and the leading traits of his impertinent supervision. But even here there was very little upon which to base a conjecture. It was noticeable, indeed, that in no one of the multiplied instances in which he had of late crossed my path had he so crossed it except to frustrate those schemes, or to disturb those actions, which, if fully carried out, might have resulted in bitter mischief. Poor justification this, in truth, for an authority so imperiously assumed! Poor indemnity for natural rights of self-agency so pertinaciously, so insultingly, denied!

I had also been forced to notice that my tormentor for a very long period of time (while scrupulously and with miraculous dexterity maintaining his whim of an identity of apparel with myself) had so contrived it, in the execution of his varied interference with my will, that I saw not at any moment the features of his face. Be Wilson what he might, *this* at least was but the veriest of affectation or of folly. Could he for an instant have supposed that in my admonisher at Eton—in the destroyer of my honor at Oxford—in him who thwarted my ambition at Rome, my revenge at Paris, my passionate love at Naples, or what he falsely termed my avarice in Egypt,—th[illegible] in this, my arch-enemy and evil genius, I could fai[illegible] nize the William Wilson of my schoolboy days,— [illegible]ke, the compan[illegible]on, the rival,—the hated and dr[illegible] [illegible] Dr. Bransby'[illegible]? Impossible!—But let me h[illegible] [illegible]st eventful sc[illegible]ne of the drama.

[illegible] Thus far h[illegible] I succumbed supinely to this im[illegible] [illegible]x tion. Th[illegible] sentiment of deep awe with whic[illegible] [illegible]sto[illegible]rded [illegible] elevated character, the majestic w[illegible]

ent omnipresence and omnipotence of Wilson, added to a feeling of even terror, with which certain other traits in his nature and assumptions inspired me, had operated hitherto to impress me with an idea of my own utter weakness and helplessness, and to suggest an implicit, although bitterly reluctant submission to his arbitrary will. But of late days I had given myself up entirely to wine, and its maddening influence upon my hereditary temper rendered me more and more impatient of control. I began to murmur, — to hesitate, — to resist. And was it only fancy which induced me to believe that, with the increase of my own firmness, that of my tormentor underwent a proportional diminution? Be this as it may, I now began to feel the inspiration of a burning hope, and at length nurtured in my secret thoughts a stern and desperate resolution that I would submit no longer to be enslaved.

It was at Rome, during the Carnival of 18—, that I attended a masquerade in the palazzo of the Neapolitan Duke Di Broglio. I had indulged more freely than usual in the excesses of the wine table, and now the suffocating atmosphere of the crowded rooms irritated me beyond endurance. The difficulty, too, of forcing my way through the mazes of the company contributed not a little to the ruffling of my temper; for I was anxiously seeking (let me not say with what unworthy motive) the young, the gay, the beautiful wife of the aged and doting Di Broglio. With a too unscrupulous confidence she had previously communicated to me the secret of the costume in which she would be habited, and now, having caught a glimpse of her person, I was hurrying to make my way into her presence. At this moment I felt a light hand placed upon my shoulder, and that ever-remembered, low, damnable *whisper* within my ear.

In an absolute frenzy of wrath I turned at once upon him who had thus interrupted me, and seized him violently by the collar. He was attired, as I had expected, in a costume altogether similar to my own; wearing a Spanish cloak of blue velvet, begirt about the waist with a crimson belt sustaining a rapier A mask of black silk entirely covered his face.

"Scoundrel!" I said, in a voice husky with rage, while every syllable I uttered seemed as new fuel to my fury; "scoundrel! impostor! accursed villain! you shall not — you *shall not* dog me unto death! Follow me, or I will stab you where you stand!" — and I broke my way from the ballroom into a small

antechamber adjoining, dragging him unresistingly with me as I went.

Upon entering, I thrust him furiously from me. He staggered against the wall, while I closed the door with an oath, and commanded him to draw. He hesitated but for an instant; then, with a slight sigh, drew in silence, and put himself upon his defence.

The contest was brief indeed. I was frantic with every species of wild excitement, and felt within my single arm the energy and power of a multitude. In a few seconds I forced him by sheer strength against the wainscoting, and thus, getting him at mercy, plunged my sword, with brute ferocity, repeatedly through and through his bosom.

At that instant some person tried the latch of the door. I hastened to prevent an intrusion, and then immediately returned to my dying antagonist. But what human language can adequately portray *that* astonishment, *that* horror, which possessed me at the spectacle then presented to view? The brief moment in which I averted my eyes had been sufficient to produce apparently a material change in the arrangements at the upper or farther end of the room. A large mirror—so at first it seemed to me in my confusion—now stood where none had been perceptible before, and, as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, advanced to meet me with a feeble and tottering gait.

Thus it appeared, I say, but was not. It was my antagonist—it was Wilson who then stood before me in the agonies of his dissolution. His mask and cloak lay where he had thrown them upon the floor. Not a thread in all his raiment—not a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of his face which was not, even in the most absolute identity, *mine own!*

It was Wilson; but he spoke no longer in a whisper, and I could have fancied that I myself was speaking while he said:—

"*You have conquered and I yield. Yet, henceforward art thou also dead—dead to the World, to Heaven, and to Hope! In me didst thou exist—and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself.*"

SONG FROM "MAUD."[1]

By ALFRED TENNYSON.

[Alfred Tennyson, Baron Tennyson: English poet; born at Somersby, England, August 6, 1809, died at Aldworth, October 6, 1892. His first poems were published with his brother Charles' in a small volume entitled "Poems of Two Brothers," in 1827 Two years later he won the chancellor's gold medal for his prize poem, "Timbuctoo" The following year came his "Poems, Chiefly Lyrical" In 1832 a new volume of miscellaneous poems was published, and was attacked savagely by the *Quarterly Review*. Ten years afterward another volume of miscellaneous verse was collected. In 1847 he published "The Princess," which was warmly received. In 1850 came "In Memoriam," and he was appointed poet laureate to succeed Wordsworth. Among his other works may be mentioned. "Idylls of the King," 1859, "Enoch Arden" and "The Holy Grail," 1869, "Queen Mary," 1875; "Harold," 1876; "The Cup," 1884; "Tiresias," 1885, "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After," 1886; "The Foresters" and "The Death of Œnone," 1892.]

I

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

II

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die

III

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

IV

I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.

[1] By permission of the Publishers, Macmillan & Co., Ltd.

In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

x.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear:
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red



THE STORY OF AN AFRICAN FARM.[1]

By OLIVE SCHREINER

[OLIVE SCHREINER, South African novelist, was born in the early sixties, the daughter of a Lutheran clergyman of South Africa Her first work, "The Story of an African Farm," published in 1884 under the pseudonym of "Ralph Iron," had an extraordinary success, and has since been followed by "Dreams," "Dream Life and Real Life," and "Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland," an attack on Mr. Cecil Rhodes and his policy. In 1894 Olive Schreiner became the wife of Mr. Cronwright, a young colonist]

SHADOWS FROM CHILD LIFE.

THE WATCH.

THE full African moon poured down its light from the blue sky into the wide, lonely plain. The dry, sandy earth, with its coating of stunted "karroo" bushes a few inches high, the low

[1] By permission of Hutchinson & Co.

hills that skirted the plain, the milk bushes with their long fingerlike leaves, all were touched by a weird and almost oppressive beauty as they lay in the white light.

In one spot only was the solemn monotony of the plain broken. Near the center a small solitary "kopje" rose. Alone it lay there, a heap of round ironstones piled one upon the other, as over some giant's grave. Here and there a few tufts of grass or small succulent plants had sprung up among its stones, and on the very summit a clump of prickly pears lifted their thorny arms, and reflected, as from mirrors, the moonlight on their broad fleshy leaves. At the foot of the "kopje" lay the homestead. First, the stone-walled "sheep kraals" and Kaffir huts; beyond them the dwelling house — a square red-brick building with thatched roof. Even on its bare red walls, and the wooden ladder that led up to the loft, the moonlight cast a kind of dreamy beauty, and quite etherealized the low brick wall that ran before the house, and which inclosed a bare patch of sand and two straggling sunflowers. On the zinc roof of the great open wagon house, on the roofs of the outbuildings that jutted from its side, the moonlight glinted with a quite peculiar brightness, till it seemed that every rib in the metal was of burnished silver.

Sleep ruled everywhere, and the homestead was not less quiet than the solitary plain.

In the farmhouse, on her great wooden bedstead, Tant' Sannie, the Boer woman, rolled heavily in her sleep.

She had gone to bed, as she always did, in her clothes, and the night was warm and the room close, and she dreamed bad dreams. Not of the ghosts and devils that so haunted her waking thoughts; not of her second husband, the consumptive Englishman, whose grave lay away beyond the ostrich camps, nor of her first, the young Boer; but only of the sheep's trotters she had eaten for supper that night. She dreamed that one stuck fast in her throat, and she rolled her huge form from side to side, and snorted horribly.

In the next room, where the maid had forgotten to close the shutter, the white moonlight fell in in a flood, and made it light as day. There were two small beds against the wall. In one lay a yellow-haired child, with a low forehead and a face of freckles; but the loving moonlight hid defects here as elsewhere, and showed only the innocent face of a child in its first sweet sleep.

The figure in the companion bed belonged of right to the moonlight, for it was of quite elfinlike beauty. The child had dropped her cover on the floor, and the moonlight looked in at the naked little limbs. Presently she opened her eyes and looked at the moonlight that was bathing her.

"Em!" she called to the sleeper in the other bed; but received no answer. Then she drew the cover from the floor, turned her pillow, and pulling the sheet over her head, went to sleep again.

Only in one of the outbuildings that jutted from the wagon house there was some one who was not asleep. The room was dark; door and shutter were closed; not a ray of light entered anywhere. The German overseer, to whom the room belonged, lay sleeping soundly on his bed in the corner, his great arms folded, and his bushy gray and black beard rising and falling on his breast. But one in the room was not asleep. Two large eyes looked about in the darkness, and two small hands were smoothing the patchwork quilt. The boy, who slept on a box under the window, had just awakened from his first sleep. He drew the quilt up to his chin, so that little peered above it but a great head of silky black curls and the two black eyes. He stared about in the darkness. Nothing was visible, not even the outline of one worm-eaten rafter, nor of the deal table, on which lay the Bible from which his father had read before they went to bed. No one could tell where the tool box was, and where the fireplace. There was something very impressive to the child in the complete darkness.

At the head of his father's bed hung a great silver hunting watch. It ticked loudly. The boy listened to it, and began mechanically to count. Tick — tick — tick! one, two, three, four! He lost count presently, and only listened. Tick — tick — tick — tick!

It never waited; it went on inexorably; and every time it ticked *a man died!* He raised himself a little on his elbow and listened. He wished it would leave off.

How many times had it ticked since he came to lie down? A thousand times, a million times, perhaps.

He tried to count again, and sat up to listen better.

"Dying, dying, dying!" said the watch; "dying, dying, dying!"

He heard it distinctly. Where were they going to, all those people?

He lay down quickly, and pulled the cover up over his head; but presently the silky curls reappeared.

"Dying, dying, dying!" said the watch; "dying, dying, dying!"

He thought of the words his father had read that evening — "*For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*"

"Many, many, many!" said the watch.

"*Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*"

"Few, few, few!" said the watch.

The boy lay with his eyes wide open. He saw before him a long stream of people, a great dark multitude, that moved in one direction; then they came to the dark edge of the world, and went over. He saw them passing on before him, and there was nothing that could stop them. He thought of how that stream had rolled on through all the long ages of the past — how the old Greeks and Romans had gone over; the countless millions of China and India, they were going over now. Since he had come to bed, how many had gone!

And the watch said, "Eternity, eternity, eternity!"

"Stop them! stop them!" cried the child.

And all the while the watch kept ticking on; just like God's will, that never changes or alters, you may do what you please.

Great beads of perspiration stood on the boy's forehead. He climbed out of bed and lay with his face turned to the mud floor.

"Oh, God, God! save them!" he cried in agony. "Only some; only a few! Only for each moment I am praying here one!" He folded his little hands upon his head. "God! God! save them!"

He groveled on the floor.

Oh, the long, long ages of the past, in which they had gone over! Oh, the long, long future, in which they would pass away! Oh, God! the long, long, long eternity, which has no end!

The child wept, and crept closer to the ground.

THE SACRIFICE.

The farm by daylight was not as the farm by moonlight. The plain was a weary flat of loose red sand, sparsely covered

by dry karroo bushes, that cracked beneath the tread like tinder, and showed the red earth everywhere. Here and there a milk bush lifted its pale-colored rods, and in every direction the ants and beetles ran about in the blazing sand. The red walls of the farmhouse, the zinc roofs of the outbuildings, the stone walls of the "kraals," all reflected the fierce sunlight, till the eye ached and blenched. No tree or shrub was to be seen far or near. The two sunflowers that stood before the door, outstared by the sun, drooped their brazen faces to the sand; and the little cicadalike insects cried aloud among the stones of the "kopje."

The Boer woman, seen by daylight, was even less lovely than when, in bed, she rolled and dreamed. She sat on a chair in the great front room, with her feet on a wooden stove, and wiped her flat face with the corner of her apron, and drank coffee, and in Cape Dutch swore that the beloved weather was damned. Less lovely, too, by daylight was the dead Englishman's child, her little stepdaughter, upon whose freckles and low, wrinkled forehead the sunlight had no mercy.

"Lyndall," the child said to her little orphan cousin, who sat with her on the floor threading beads, "how is it your beads never fall off your needle?"

"I try," said the little one, gravely, moistening her tiny finger. "That is why."

The overseer, seen by daylight, was a huge German, wearing a shabby suit, and with a childish habit of rubbing his hands and nodding his head prodigiously when pleased at anything. He stood out at the "kraals" in the blazing sun, explaining to two Kaffir boys the approaching end of the world. The boys, as they cut the cakes of dung, winked at each other, and worked as slowly as they possibly could; but the German never saw it.

Away, beyond the "kopje," Waldo, his son, herded the ewes and lambs — a small and dusty herd — powdered all over from head to foot with red sand, wearing a ragged coat and shoes of undressed leather, through whose holes the toes looked out. His hat was too large, and had sunk down to his eyes, concealing completely the silky black curls. It was a curious small figure. His flock gave him little trouble. It was too hot for them to move far; they gathered round every little milk bush as though they hoped to find shade, and stood there motionless in clumps. He himself crept under a shelving rock

kraal, and the boy clambered halfway up the "kopje." He crouched down between two stones and gave the call. Just then the milkherd came walking out of the cow kraal with two pails. He was an ill-looking Kaffir.

"Ah!" thought the boy, "perhaps he will die to-night, and go to hell! I must pray for him, I must pray!"

Then he thought — "Where am *I* going to?" and he prayed desperately.

"Ah! this is not right at all," little Em said, peeping between the stones, and finding him in a very curious posture. "What *are* you doing, Waldo? It is not the play, you know. You should run out when we come to the white stone. Ah, you do not play nicely."

"I — I will play nicely now," said the boy, coming out and standing sheepishly before them; "I — I only forgot; I will play now."

"He has been to sleep," said freckled Em.

"No," said beautiful little Lyndall, looking curiously at him; "he has been crying."

She never made a mistake.

THE CONFESSION.

One night, two years after, the boy sat alone on the "kopje." He had crept softly from his father's room and come there. He often did, because, when he prayed or cried aloud, his father might awake and hear him; and none knew his great sorrow, and none knew his grief, but he himself, and he buried them deep in his heart.

He turned up the brim of his great hat and looked at the moon, but most at the leaves of the prickly pear that grew just before him. They glinted, and glinted, and glinted, just like his own heart — cold, so hard, and very wicked. His physical heart had pain also; it seemed full of little bits of glass, that hurt. He had sat there for half an hour, and he dared not go back to the close house.

He felt horribly lonely. There was not one thing so wicked as he in all the world, and he knew it. He folded his arms and began to cry — not aloud; he sobbed without making any sound, and his tears left scorched marks where they fell. He could not pray; he had prayed night and day for so many months; and to-night he could not pray. When he left off

crying, he held his aching head with his brown hands. If one might have gone up to him and touched him kindly; poor, ugly little thing! Perhaps his heart was almost broken.

With his swollen eyes he sat there on a flat stone at the very top of the "kopje," and the tree, with every one of its wicked leaves, blinked, and blinked, and blinked at him. Presently he began to cry again, and then stopped his crying to look at it. He was quiet for a long while, then he knelt up slowly and bent forward. There was a secret he had carried in his heart for a year. He had not dared to look at it; he had not whispered it to himself; but for a year he had carried it. "I hate God!" he said. The wind took the words and ran away with them, among the stones, and through the leaves of the prickly pear. He thought it died away half down the "kopje." He had told it now!

"I love Jesus Christ, but I hate God."

The wind carried away that sound as it had done the first. Then he got up and buttoned his old coat about him. He knew he was certainly lost now; he did not care. If half the world were to be lost, why not he too? He would not pray for mercy any more. Better so — better to know certainly. It was ended now. Better so.

He began scrambling down the sides of the "kopje" to go home.

Better so! — But oh, the loneliness, the agonized pain! for that night, and for nights on nights to come! The anguish that sleeps all day on the heart like a heavy worm, and wakes up at night to feed!

There are some of us who in after years say to Fate, "Now deal us your hardest blow, give us what you will; but let us never again suffer as we suffered when we were children."

The barb in the arrow of childhood's suffering is this: its intense loneliness, its intense ignorance.

Gregory Rose finds his Affinity.

The new man, Gregory Rose, sat at the door of his dwelling, his arms folded, his legs crossed, and a profound melancholy seeming to rest over his soul. His house was a little square daub-and-wattle building, far out in the karroo, two miles from the homestead. It was covered outside with a somber coating of brown mud, two little panes being let into the walls

for windows. Behind it were the sheep kraals, and to the right a large dam, now principally containing baked mud. Far off the little "kopje" concealed the homestead, and was not itself an object conspicuous enough to relieve the dreary monotony of the landscape.

Before the door sat Gregory Rose in his shirt sleeves, on a camp stool, and ever and anon he sighed deeply. There was that in his countenance for which even his depressing circumstances failed to account. Again and again he looked at the little "kopje," at the milk pail at his side, and at the brown pony, who a short way off cropped the dry bushes — and sighed.

Presently he rose and went into his house. It was one tiny room, the whitewashed walls profusely covered with prints cut from the *Illustrated London News*, and in which there was a noticeable preponderance of female faces and figures. A stretcher filled one end of the hut, and a rack for a gun and a little hanging looking-glass diversified the gable opposite, while in the center stood a chair and table. All was scrupulously neat and clean, for Gregory kept a little duster folded in the corner of his table drawer, just as he had seen his mother do, and every morning before he went out he said his prayers, and made his bed, and dusted the table and the legs of the chairs, and even the pictures on the wall and the gun rack.

On this hot afternoon he took from beneath his pillow a watch bag made by his sister Jemima, and took out the watch. Only half-past four! With a suppressed groan he dropped it back and sat down beside the table. Half-past four! Presently he roused himself. He would write to his sister Jemima. He always wrote to her when he was miserable. She was his safety valve. He forgot her when he was happy; but he used her when he was wretched.

He took out ink and paper. There was a family crest and motto on the latter, for the Roses since coming to the colony had discovered that they were of distinguished lineage. Old Rose himself, an honest English farmer, knew nothing of his noble descent; but his wife and daughter knew — especially his daughter. There were Roses in England who kept a Park and dated from the Conquest. So the colonial "Rose Farm" became "Rose Manor" in remembrance of the ancestral domain, and the claim of the Roses to noble blood was established — in their own minds at least.

Gregory took up one of the white, crested sheets; but on

deeper reflection he determined to take a pink one, as more suitable to the state of his feelings. He began: —

KOPJE ALONE,
Monday Afternoon.

MY DEAR JEMIMA —

Then he looked up into the little glass opposite. It was a youthful face reflected there, with curling brown beard and hair; but in the dark blue eyes there was a look of languid longing that touched him. He re-dipped his pen and wrote: —

When I look up into the little glass that hangs opposite me, I wonder if that changed and sad face ——

Here he sat still and reflected. It sounded almost as if he might be conceited or unmanly to be looking at his own face in the glass. No, that would not do. So he looked for another pink sheet and began again.

KOPJE ALONE,
Monday Afternoon.

DEAR SISTER, — It is hardly six months since I left you to come to this spot, yet could you now see me I know what you would say, I know what mother would say — "Can that be our Greg — that thing with the strange look in his eyes?"

Yes, Jemima, it is your Greg, and the change has been coming over me ever since I came here, but it is greatest since yesterday You know what sorrows I have passed through, Jemima: how unjustly I was always treated at school, the masters keeping me back and calling me a blockhead, though, as they themselves allowed, I had the best memory of any boy in the school, and could repeat whole books from beginning to end You know how cruelly father always used me, calling me a noodle and a milksop, just because he couldn't understand my fine nature. You know how he has made a farmer of me instead of a minister, as I ought to have been, you know it all, Jemima; and how I have borne it all, not as a woman, who whines for every touch, but as a man should — in silence.

But there are things, there is *a* thing, which the soul longs to pour forth into a kindred ear.

Dear sister, have you ever known what it is to keep wanting and wanting and wanting to kiss some one's mouth, and you may not; to touch some one's hand, and you cannot? I am in love, Jemima.

The old Dutch woman from whom I hire this place has a little stepdaughter, and her name begins with *E.*

She is English. I do not know how her father came to marry a Boer woman. It makes me feel so strange to put down that letter, that I can hardly go on writing — *E.* I've loved her ever since I

came here. For weeks I have not been able to eat or drink; my very tobacco when I smoke has no taste; and I can remain for no more than five minutes in one place, and sometimes feel as though I were really going mad.

Every evening I go there to fetch my milk. Yesterday she gave me some coffee. The spoon fell on the ground. She picked it up; when she gave it me her finger touched mine. Jemima, I do not know if I fancied it — I shivered hot, and she shivered too! I thought, "It is all right; she will be mine; she loves me!" Just then, Jemima, in came a fellow, a great, coarse fellow, a German — a ridiculous fellow, with curls right down to his shoulders; it makes one *sick* to look at him. He's only a servant of the Boer woman's, and a low, vulgar, uneducated thing, that's never been to boarding school in his life. He had been to the next farm seeking sheep. When he came in she said, "Good evening, Waldo. Have some coffee!" *and she kissed him.*

All last night I heard nothing else but "Have some coffee; have some coffee." If I went to sleep for a moment I dreamed that her finger was pressing mine; but when I woke with a start I heard her say, "Good evening, Waldo. Have some coffee!"

Is this madness?

I have not eaten a mouthful to-day. This evening I go and propose to her. If she refuses me I shall go and kill myself to-morrow. There is a dam of water close by. The sheep have drunk most of it up, but there is still enough if I tie a stone to my neck.

It is a choice between death and madness. I can endure no more. If this should be the last letter you ever get from me, think of me tenderly, and forgive me. Without her, life would be a howling wilderness, a long tribulation. She is my affinity; the one love of my life, of my youth, of my manhood; my sunshine; my God-given blossom.

> They never loved who dreamed that they loved once,
> And who saith, "I loved once"? —
> Not angels, whose deep eyes look down through realms of light!

Your disconsolate brother, on what is, in all probability, the last and distracted night of his life,

GREGORY NAZIANZEN ROSE

P. S. — Tell mother to take care of my pearl studs. I left them in the wash-hand-stand drawer. Don't let the children get hold of them.

P. P. S. — I shall take this letter with me to the farm. If I turn down one corner you may know I have been accepted; if not you may know it is all up with your heart-broken brother.

G. N. R.

Gregory, having finished this letter, read it over with much approval, put it in an envelope, addressed it, and sat contemplating the ink pot, somewhat relieved in mind.

The evening turned out chilly and very windy after the day's heat. From afar off, as Gregory neared the homestead on the brown pony, he could distinguish a little figure in a little red cloak at the door of the cow kraal. Em leaned over the poles that barred the gate, and watched the frothing milk run through the black fingers of the herdsman, while the unwilling cows stood with tethered heads by the milking poles. She had thrown the red cloak over her own head, and held it under her chin with a little hand to keep from her ears the wind, that playfully shook it, and tossed the little fringe of yellow hair into her eyes.

"Is it not too cold for you to be standing here?" said Gregory, coming softly close to her.

"Oh, no; it is so nice. I always come to watch the milking. That red cow with the short horns is bringing up the calf of the white cow that died. She loves it so — just as if it were her own. It is so nice to see her lick its little ears. Just look!"

"The clouds are black. I think it is going to rain to-night," said Gregory.

"Yes," answered Em, looking up as well as she could for the little yellow fringe.

"But I'm sure you must be cold," said Gregory, and put his hand under the cloak, and found there a small fist doubled up, soft and very warm. He held it fast in his hand.

"Oh, Em, I love you better than all the world besides! Tell me, *do* you love me a little?"

"Yes, I do," said Em, hesitating, and trying softly to free her hand.

"Better than everything; better than all the world, darling?" he asked, bending down so low that the yellow hair was blown into his eyes.

"I don't know," said Em, gravely. "I do love you very much; but I love my cousin who is at school, and Waldo, very much. You see I have known them so long!"

"Oh, Em, do not talk to me so coldly," Gregory cried, seizing the little arm that rested on the gate, and pressing it till she was half afraid. The herdsman had moved away to the other end of the kraal now, and the cows, busy with their calves, took no notice of the little human farce.

"Em, if you talk so to me I will go mad! You must love me, love me better than all! You must give yourself to me. I have loved you since that first moment when I saw you walking by the stone wall with the jug in your hands. You were made for me, created for me! I will love you till I die! Oh, Em, do not be so cold, so cruel to me!"

He held her arm so tightly that her fingers relaxed their hold, and the cloak fluttered down on to the ground, and the wind played more roughly than ever with the little yellow head.

"I do love you very much," she said; "but I do not know if I want to marry you. I love you better than Waldo, but I can't tell if I love you better than Lyndall. If you would let me wait for a week, I think perhaps I could tell you."

Gregory picked up the cloak and wrapped it round her.

"If you could but love me as I love you," he said; "but no woman *can* love as a man can. I will wait till next Saturday. I will not once come near you till then. Good-by! Oh, Em," he said, turning again, and twining his arm about her, and kissing her surprised little mouth, "if you are not my wife I cannot live. I have never loved another woman, and I never shall! — never, never!"

"You make me afraid," said Em. "Come, let us go, and I will fill your pail."

"I want no milk. — Good-by! You will not see me again till Saturday."

Late that night, when every one else had gone to bed, the yellow-haired little woman stood alone in the kitchen. She had come to fill the kettle for the next morning's coffee, and now stood before the fire. The warm reflection lit the grave old-womanish little face, that was so unusually thoughtful this evening.

"Better than all the world; better than everything; he loves me better than everything!" She said the words aloud, as if they were more easy to believe if she spoke them so. She had given out so much love in her little life, and had got none of it back with interest. Now one said, "I love you better than all the world." One loved her better than she loved him. How suddenly rich she was. She kept clasping and unclasping her hands. So a beggar feels who falls asleep on the pavement wet and hungry, and who wakes in a palace hall with servants and lights, and a feast before him. Of course the beggar's is only a dream, and he wakes from it; and this was real.

Gregory had said to her, "I will love you as long as I live." She said the words over and over to herself like a song.

"I will send for him to-morrow, and I will tell him how I love him back," she said.

But Em needed not to send for him. Gregory discovered on reaching home that Jemima's letter was still in his pocket. And, therefore, much as he disliked the appearance of vacillation and weakness, he was obliged to be at the farmhouse before sunrise to post it.

"If I see her," Gregory said, "I shall only bow to her. She shall see that I am a man, one who keeps his word."

As to Jemima's letter, he had turned down one corner of the page, and then turned it back, leaving a deep crease. That would show that he was neither accepted nor rejected, but that matters were in an intermediate condition. It was a more poetical way than putting it in plain words.

Gregory was barely in time with his letter, for Waldo was starting when he reached the homestead, and Em was on the doorstep to see him off. When he had given the letter, and Waldo had gone, Gregory bowed stiffly and prepared to remount his own pony, but somewhat slowly. It was still early; none of the servants were about. Em came up close to him and put her little hand softly on his arm as he stood by his horse.

"I do love you best of all," she said. She was not frightened now, however much he kissed her. "I wish I was beautiful and nice," she added, looking up into his eyes as he held her against his breast.

"My darling, to me you are more beautiful than all the women in the world; dearer to me than everything it holds. If you were in hell I would go after you to find you there! If you were dead, though my body moved, my soul would be under the ground with you. All life as I pass it with you in my arms will be perfect to me. It will pass, pass like a ray of sunshine."

Em thought how beautiful and grand his face was as she looked up into it. She raised her hand gently and put it on his forehead.

"You are so silent, so cold, my Em," he cried. "Have you nothing to say to me?"

A little shade of wonder filled her eyes.

"I will do everything you tell me," she said.

What else could she say? Her idea of love was only service.

"Then, my own precious one, promise never to kiss that fellow again. I cannot bear that you should love any one but me. You must not! I will not have it! If every relation I had in the world were to die to-morrow, I would be quite happy if I still only had you! My darling, my love, why are you so cold? Promise me not to love him any more. If you ask *me* to do anything for *you*, I would do it, though it cost my life."

Em put her hand very gravely round his neck.

"I will never kiss him," she said, "and I will try not to love any one else. But I do not know if I will be able."

"Oh, my darling, I think of *you* all night, all day. I think of nothing else, love nothing else," he said, folding his arms about her.

Em was a little conscience-stricken; even that morning she had found time to remember that in six months her cousin would come back from school, and she had thought to remind Waldo of the lozenges for his cough, even when she saw Gregory coming.

"I do not know how it is," she said humbly, nestling to him, "but I cannot love you so much as you love me. Perhaps it is because I am only a woman; but I *do* love you as much as I can."

Now the Kaffir maids were coming from the huts. He kissed her again, eyes and mouth and hands, and left her.

Tant' Sannie was well satisfied when told of the betrothment. She herself contemplated marriage within the year with one or other of her numerous "vrijers," and she suggested that the weddings might take place together.

Em set to work busily to prepare her own household linen and wedding garments. Gregory was with her daily, almost hourly, and the six months which elapsed before Lyndall's return passed, as he felicitously phrased it, "like a summer night, when you are dreaming of some one you love."

Late one evening, Gregory sat by his little love, turning the handle of her machine as she drew her work through it, and they talked of the changes they would make when the Boer woman was gone, and the farm belonged to them alone. There should be a new room here, and a kraal there. So they chatted on. Suddenly Gregory dropped the handle, and impressed a fervent kiss on the fat hand that guided the linen.

"You are so beautiful, Em," said the lover. "It comes over me in a flood suddenly, how I love you."

Em smiled.

"Tant' Sannie says when I am her age no one will look at me; and it is true. My hands are as short and broad as a duck's foot, and my forehead is so low, and I haven't any nose. I *can't* be pretty."

She laughed softly. It was so nice to think he should be so blind.

"When my cousin comes to-morrow you will see a beautiful woman, Gregory," she added presently. "She is like a little queen: her shoulders are so upright, and her head looks as though it ought to have a little crown upon it. You must come to see her to-morrow as soon as she comes. I am sure you will love her."

"Of course I shall come to see her, since she is your cousin; but do you think I could *ever* think any woman as lovely as I think you?"

He fixed his seething eyes upon her.

"You could not help seeing that she is prettier," said Em, slipping her right hand into his; "but you will never be able to like any one so much as you like me."

Afterward, when she wished her lover good night, she stood upon the doorstep to call a greeting after him; and she waited, as she always did, till the brown pony's hoofs became inaudible behind the "kopje."

Then she passed through the room where Tant' Sannie lay snoring, and through the little room that was all draped in white, waiting for her cousin's return, on to her own room.

She went to the chest of drawers to put away the work she had finished, and sat down on the floor before the lowest drawer. In it were the things she was preparing for her marriage. Piles of white linen, and some aprons and quilts; and in the little box in the corner a spray of orange blossom which she had brought from a smouse. There, too, was a ring Gregory had given her, and a veil his sister had sent, and there was a little roll of fine embroidered work which Trana had given her. It was too fine and good even for Gregory's wife — just right for something very small and soft. She would keep it. And she touched it gently with her forefinger, smiling; and then she blushed and hid it far behind the other things. She knew so well all that was in that drawer, and yet she turned them all over as though she saw them for the first time, packed

them all out, and packed them all in, without one fold or crumple; and then sat down and looked at them.

To-morrow evening when Lyndall came she would bring her here, and show it her all. Lyndall would so like to see it—the little wreath, and the ring, and the white veil! It would be so nice! Then Em fell to seeing pictures. Lyndall should live with them till she herself got married some day.

Every day when Gregory came home, tired from his work, he would look about and say, "Where is my wife? Has no one seen my wife? Wife, some coffee!" and she would give him some.

Em's little face grew very grave at last, and she knelt up and extended her hands over the drawer of linen.

"Oh, God!" she said, "I am so glad! I do not know what I have done that I should be so glad. Thank you!"

Waldo goes out to sit in the Sunshine.

It had been a princely day. The long morning had melted slowly into a rich afternoon. Rains had covered the karroo with a heavy coat of green that hid the red earth everywhere. In the very chinks of the stone walls dark green leaves hung out, and beauty and growth had crept even into the beds of the sandy furrows and lined them with weeds. On the broken sod walls of the old pigsty chickweeds flourished, and ice plants lifted their transparent leaves. Waldo was at work in the wagon house again. He was making a kitchen table for Em. As the long curls gathered in heaps before his plane, he paused for an instant now and again to throw one down to a small naked nigger, who had crept from its mother, who stood churning in the sunshine, and had crawled into the wagon house. From time to time the little animal lifted its fat hand as it expected a fresh shower of curls; till Doss, jealous of his master's noticing any other small creature but himself, would catch the curl in its mouth and roll the little Kaffir over in the sawdust, much to that small animal's contentment. It was too lazy an afternoon to be really ill-natured, so Doss satisfied himself with snapping at the little nigger's fingers, and sitting on him till he laughed. Waldo, as he worked, glanced down at them now and then, and smiled; but he never looked out across the plain. He was conscious without looking of that broad green earth; it made his work pleasant to him. Near

the shadow at the gable the mother of the little nigger stood churning. Slowly she raised and let fall the stick in her hands, murmuring to herself a sleepy chant such as her people love; it sounded like the humming of far-off bees.

A different life showed itself in the front of the house, where Tant' Sannie's cart stood ready inspanned, and the Boer woman herself sat in the front room drinking coffee. She had come to visit her stepdaughter, probably for the last time, as she now weighed two hundred and sixty pounds, and was not easily able to move. On a chair sat her mild young husband nursing the baby — a pudding-faced, weak-eyed child.

"You take it and get into the cart with it," said Tant' Sannie. "What do you want here, listening to our woman's talk?"

The young man arose, and meekly went out with the baby.

"I'm very glad you are going to be married, my child," said Tant' Sannie, as she drained the last drop from her coffee cup. "I wouldn't say so while that boy was here, it would make him too conceited; but marriage is the finest thing in the world. I've been at it three times, and if it pleased God to take this husband from me I should have another. There's nothing like it, my child; nothing."

"Perhaps it might not suit all people, at all times, as well as it suits you, Tant' Sannie," said Em. There was a little shade of weariness in the voice.

"Not suit every one!" said Tant' Sannie. "If the beloved Redeemer didn't mean men to have wives what did He make women for? that's what I say. If a woman's old enough to marry, and doesn't, she's sinning against the Lord — it's a wanting to know better than Him. What, does she think the Lord took all that trouble in making her for nothing? It's evident He wants babies, otherwise why does He send them? Not that I've done much in that way myself," said Tant' Sannie, sorrowfully; "but I've done my best."

She rose with some difficulty from her chair, and began moving slowly toward the door.

"It's a strange thing," she said, "but you can't love a man till you've had a baby by him. Now there's that boy there, — when we were first married, if he only sneezed in the night I boxed his ears; now if he lets his pipe ash come on my milk cloths I don't think of laying a finger on him. There's nothing like being married," said Tant' Sannie, as she puffed toward

the door. "If a woman's got a baby and a husband she's got the best things the Lord can give her; if only the baby doesn't have convulsions. As for a husband, it's very much the same who one has. Some men are fat, and some men are thin; some drink brandy, and some men drink gin; but it all comes to the same thing in the end; it's all one. A man's a man, you know."

Here they came upon Gregory, who was sitting in the shade before the house. Tant' Sannie shook hands with him.

"I'm glad you're going to get married," she said. "I hope you'll have as many children in five years as a cow has calves, and more too. I think I'll just go and have a look at your soap pot before I start," she said, turning to Em. "Not that I believe in this new plan of putting soda in the pot. If the dear Father had meant soda to be put into soap, what would He have made milk bushes for, and stuck them all over the 'veld' as thick as lambs in the lambing season?"

She waddled off after Em in the direction of the built-in soap pot, leaving Gregory as they found him, with his dead pipe lying on the bench beside him, and his blue eyes gazing out far across the flat, like one who sits on the seashore watching that which is fading, fading from him. Against his breast was a letter found in a desk addressed to himself, but never posted. It held only four words: "You must marry Em." He wore it in a black bag round his neck. It was the only letter she had ever written to him.

"You see if the sheep don't have the scab this year!" said Tant' Sannie as she waddled after Em. "It's with all these new inventions that the wrath of God *must* fall on us. What were the children of Israel punished for, if it wasn't for making the golden calf? I may have my sins, but I do remember the tenth commandment: 'Honor thy father and thy mother that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayst live long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee!' It's all very well to say we honor them, and then to be finding out things that they never knew, and doing things in a way they never did them! *My* mother boiled soap with bushes, and I will boil soap with bushes. If the wrath of God is to fall upon this land," said Tant' Sannie, with the serenity of conscious virtue, "it shall not be through me. Let them make their steam wagons and their fire carriages; let them go on as though the dear Lord didn't know what He was about when He gave horses

and oxen legs — the destruction of the Lord will follow them. I don't know how such people read their Bibles. When do we hear of Moses or Noah riding in a railway? The Lord sent fire carriages out of heaven in those days; there's no chance of His sending them for us if we go on in this way," said Tant' Sannie, sorrowfully, thinking of the splendid chance which this generation had lost.

Arrived at the soap pot, she looked over into it thoughtfully.

"Depend upon it you'll get the itch, or some other disease; the blessing of the Lord'll never rest upon it," said the Boer woman. Then suddenly she broke forth. "And she eighty-two, and goats, and rams, and eight thousand morgen, and the rams real angora, and two thousand sheep, and a short-horned bull," said Tant' Sannie, standing upright and planting a hand on each hip.

Em looked at her in silent wonder. Had connubial bliss and the joys of motherhood really turned the old Boer woman's head?

"Yes," said Tant' Sannie; "I had almost forgotten to tell you. By the Lord, if I had him here! We were walking to church last Sacrament Sunday, Piet and I. Close in front of us was old Tant' Trana, with dropsy and cancer, and can't live eight months. Walking by her was something with its hands under its coat tails, flap, flap, flap; and its chin in the air, and a stick-up collar, and the black hat on the very back of the head. I knew him! 'Who's that?' I asked. 'The rich Englishman that Tant' Trana married last week.' 'Rich Englishman! I'll rich Englishman him,' I said; 'I'll tell Tant' Trana a thing or two.' My fingers were just in his little white curls. If it hadn't been the blessed Sacrament, he wouldn't have walked so 'sourka sourka, courka,' any more. But I thought, Wait till I've had it, and then —— But he, sly fox, son of Satan, seed of the Amalekite, he saw me looking at him in the church. The blessed Sacrament wasn't half over when he takes Tant' Trana by the arm, and out they go. I clap my baby down to its father, and I go after them. But," said Tant' Sannie, regretfully, "I couldn't get up to them; I am too fat. When I got to the corner he was pulling Tant' Trana up into the cart. 'Tant' Trana,' I said, 'you've married a Kaffir's dog, a Hottentot's "brakje."' I hadn't any more breath. He winked at me; he winked at *me*," said Tant' Sannie, her sides shaking with indignation, "first with one eye, and then with

the other, and then drove away. Child of the Amalekite!" said Tant' Sannie, "if it hadn't been the blessed Sacrament. Lord, Lord, Lord!"

Here the little Bush girl came running to say that the horses would stand no longer, and still breathing out vengeance against her old adversary she labored toward the cart. Shaking hands and affectionately kissing Em, she was with some difficulty drawn up. Then slowly the cart rolled away, the good Boer woman putting her head out between the sails to smile and nod. Em stood watching it for a time, then as the sun dazzled her eyes she turned away. There was no use in going to sit with Gregory: he liked best sitting there alone, staring across the green karroo: and till the maid had done churning there was nothing to do; so Em walked away to the wagon house, and climbed on to the end of Waldo's table, and sat there, swinging one little foot slowly to and fro, while the wooden curls from the plane heaped themselves up against her black print dress.

"Waldo," she said at last, "Gregory has given me the money he got for the wagon and oxen, and I have fifty pounds besides that once belonged to some one. I know what they would have liked to have done with it. You must take it and go to some place and study for a year or two."

"No, little one, I will not take it," he said, as he planed slowly away; "the time was when I would have been very grateful to any one who would have given me a little money, a little help, a little power of gaining knowledge. But now, I have gone so far alone I may go on to the end. I don't want it, little one."

She did not seem pained at his refusal, but swung her foot to and fro, the little old wrinkled forehead more wrinkled up than ever.

"Why is it always so, Waldo, always so?" she said; "we long for things, and long for them, and pray for them; we would give all we have to come near to them, but we never reach them. Then at last, too late, just when we don't want them any more, when all the sweetness is taken out of them, then they come. We don't want them then," she said, folding her hands resignedly on her little apron. After a while she added, "I remember once, very long ago, when I was a very little girl, my mother had a workbox full of colored reels. I always wanted to play with them, but she would never let me.

At last one day she said I might take the box. I was so glad I hardly knew what to do. I ran round the house, and sat down with it on the back steps. But when I opened the box all the cottons were taken out."

She sat for a while longer, till the Kaffir maid had finished churning, and was carrying the butter toward the house. Then Em prepared to slip off the table, but first she laid her little hand on Waldo's. He stopped his planing and looked up.

"Gregory is going to the town to-morrow. He is going to give in our banns to the minister; we are going to be married in three weeks."

Waldo lifted her very gently from the table. He did not congratulate her; perhaps he thought of the empty box, but he kissed her forehead gravely.

She walked away toward the house, but stopped when she had got halfway. "I will bring you a glass of buttermilk when it is cool," she called out; and soon her clear voice came ringing out through the back windows as she sang the "Blue Water" to herself, and washed the butter.

Waldo did not wait till she returned. Perhaps he had at last really grown weary of work; perhaps he felt the wagon house chilly (for he had shuddered two or three times), though that was hardly likely in that warm summer weather; or, perhaps, and most probably, one of his old dreaming fits had come upon him suddenly. He put his tools carefully together, ready for to-morrow, and walked slowly out. At the side of the wagon house there was a world of bright sunshine, and a hen with her chickens was scratching among the gravel. Waldo seated himself near them with his back against the red-brick wall. The long afternoon was half spent, and the "kopje" was just beginning to cast its shadow over the round-headed yellow flowers that grew between it and the farmhouse. Among the flowers the white butterflies hovered, and on the old kraal mounds three white kids gamboled, and at the door of one of the huts an old gray-headed Kaffir woman sat on the ground mending her mats. A balmy, restful peacefulness seemed to reign everywhere. Even the old hen seemed well satisfied. She scratched among the stones and called to her chickens when she found a treasure; and all the while tucked to herself with intense inward satisfaction. Waldo, as he sat with his knees drawn up to his chin, and his arms folded on them, looked at it all and smiled. An evil world,

a deceitful, treacherous, miragelike world, it might be; but a lovely world for all that, and to sit there gloating in the sunlight was perfect. It was worth having been a little child, and having cried and prayed, so one might sit there. He moved his hands as though he were washing them in the sunshine. There will always be something worth living for while there are shimmery afternoons. Waldo chuckled with intense inward satisfaction as the old hen had done; she, over the insects and the warmth; he over the old brick walls, and the haze, and the little bushes. Beauty is God's wine, with which He recompenses the souls that love Him; He makes them drunk.

The fellow looked, and at last stretched out one hand to a little ice plant that grew on the sod wall of the sty; not as though he would have picked it, but as it were in a friendly greeting. He loved it. One little leaf of the ice plant stood upright, and the sun shone through it. He could see every little crystal cell like a drop of ice in the transparent green, and it thrilled him.

There are only rare times when a man's soul can see Nature. So long as any passion holds its revel there, the eyes are holden that they should not see her.

Go out if you will, and walk alone on the hillside in the evening, but if your favorite child lies ill at home, or your lover comes to-morrow, or at your heart there lies a scheme for the holding of wealth, then you will return as you went out; you will have seen nothing. For Nature, ever, like the old Hebrew God, cries out, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Only then, when there comes a pause, a blank in your life, when the old idol is broken, when the old hope is dead, when the old desire is crushed, then the Divine compensation of Nature is made manifest. She shows herself to you. So near she draws you, that the blood seems to flow from her to you, through a still uncut cord: you feel the throb of her life.

When that day comes, that you sit down broken, without one human creature to whom you cling, with your loves the dead and the living-dead; when the very thirst for knowledge through long-continued thwarting has grown dull; when in the present there is no craving, and in the future no hope, then, oh, with a beneficent tenderness, Nature enfolds you.

Then the large white snowflakes as they flutter down, softly, one by one, whisper soothingly, "Rest, poor heart,

rest!" It is as though our mother smoothed our hair, and we are comforted.

And yellow-legged bees as they hum make a dreamy lyric; and the light on the brown stone wall is a great work of art; and the glitter through the leaves makes the pulses beat.

Well to die then; for, if you live, so surely as the years come, so surely as the spring succeeds the winter, so surely will passions arise. They will creep back, one by one, into the bosom that has cast them forth, and fasten there again, and peace will go. Desire, ambition, and the fierce, agonizing flood of love for the living — they will spring again. Then Nature will draw down her veil: with all your longing you shall not be able to raise one corner; you cannot bring back those peaceful days. Well to die then!

Sitting there with his arms folded on his knees, and his hat slouched down over his face, Waldo looked out into the yellow sunshine that tinted even the very air with the color of ripe corn, and was happy.

He was an uncouth creature with small learning, and no prospect in the future but that of making endless tables and stone walls, yet it seemed to him as he sat there that life was a rare and very rich thing. He rubbed his hands in the sunshine. Ah, to live on so, year after year, how well! Always in the present; letting each day glide, bringing its own labor and its own beauty; the gradual lighting up of the hills, night and the stars, firelight and the coals! To live on so, calmly, far from the paths of men; and to look at the lives of clouds and insects; to look deep into the heart of flowers, and see how lovingly the pistil and the stamens nestle there together; and to see in the thorn pods how the little seeds suck their life through the delicate curled-up string, and how the little embryo sleeps inside! Well, how well, to sit on one side, taking no part in the world's life; but when great men blossom into books looking into those flowers also, to see how the world of men too opens beautifully, leaf after leaf. Ah! life is delicious; well to live long, and see the darkness breaking, and the day coming! The day when soul shall not thrust back soul that would come to it; when men shall not be driven to seek solitude, because of the crying-out of their hearts for love and sympathy. Well to live long and see the new time breaking. Well to live long: life is sweet, sweet, sweet! In his

breast pocket, where of old the broken slate used to be, there was now a little dancing shoe of his friend who was sleeping. He could feel it when he folded his arm tight against his breast; and that was well also. He drew his hat lower over his eyes, and sat so motionless that the chickens thought he was asleep, and gathered closer around him. One even ventured to peck at his boot; but he ran away quickly. Tiny, yellow fellow that he was, he knew that men were dangerous; even sleeping they might awake. But Waldo did not sleep, and coming back from his sunshiny dream, stretched out his hand for the tiny thing to mount. But the chicken eyed the hand askance, and then ran off to hide under its mother's wing, and from beneath it it sometimes put out its round head to peep at the great figure sitting there. Presently its brothers ran off after a little white moth, and it ran out to join them; and when the moth fluttered away over their heads they stood looking up disappointed, and then ran back to their mother.

Waldo through his half-closed eyes looked at them. Thinking, fearing, craving, those tiny sparks of brother life, what were they, so real there in that old yard on that sunshiny afternoon? A few years — where would they be? Strange little brother spirits! He stretched his hand toward them, for his heart went out to them; but not one of the little creatures came nearer him, and he watched them gravely for a time; then he smiled, and began muttering to himself after his old fashion. Afterward he folded his arms upon his knees, and rested his forehead on them. And so he sat there in the yellow sunshine, muttering, muttering, muttering to himself.

It was not very long after when Em came out at the back door with a towel thrown across her head, and in her hand a cup of milk.

"Ah," she said, coming close to him, "he is sleeping now. He will find it when he wakes, and be glad of it."

She put it down upon the ground beside him. The mother hen was at work still among the stones, but the chickens had climbed about him, and were perching on him. One stood upon his shoulder, and rubbed its little head softly against his black curls; another tried to balance itself on the very edge of the old felt hat. One tiny fellow stood upon his hand, and tried to crow; another had nestled itself down comfortably on the old coat sleeve, and gone to sleep there.

Em did not drive them away; but she covered the glass



"Standing, with reluctant feet, where the brook and river meet"

softly at his side. "He will wake soon," she said, "and be glad of it."

But the chickens were wiser.



MAIDENHOOD.

By HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Maiden! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run!

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance
On the river's broad expanse!

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Seest the falcon's shadow fly?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar?

O, thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares!
Care and age come unawares!

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossom many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds, that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.



THE CONVICT IN THE MARSHES.

By CHARLES DICKENS.

(From "Great Expectations" For biographical sketch, see page 8055)

[This piece is inserted in the sure and happy belief that any one who reads it will be unable to resist reading the novel of which it is the introductory chapter.]

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I give Pirrip as my father's family name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister — Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. As I never saw my father or my mother,

and never saw any likeness of either of them (for their days were long before the days of photographs), my first fancies regarding what they were like were unreasonably derived from their tombstones. The shape of the letters on my father's gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, "*Also Georgiana, Wife of the Above,*" I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly. To five little stone lozenges, each about a foot and a half long, which were arranged in a neat row beside their grave, and were sacred to the memory of five little brothers of mine — who gave up trying to get a living exceedingly early in that universal struggle — I am indebted for a belief I religiously entertained that they had all been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers pockets, and had never taken them out in this state of existence.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea. My first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. At such a time I found out for certain that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana, wife of the above, were dead and buried; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias, and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also dead and buried; and that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dikes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry was Pip.

"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!"

A fearful man, all in coarse gray, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briers; who limped, and shivered, and glared, and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

"Oh! Don't cut my throat, sir," I pleaded in terror. "Pray don't do it, sir."

"Tell us your name!" said the man. "Quick!"

"Pip, sir."

"Once more," said the man, staring at me. "Give it mouth!"

"Pip. Pip, sir."

"Show us where you live," said the man. "Pint out the place!"

I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat inshore among the alder trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church.

The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside down and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself — for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeple under my feet — when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone, trembling, while he ate the bread ravenously.

"You young dog," said the man, licking his lips, "what fat cheeks you ha' got."

I believe they were fat, though I was at that time undersized for my years, and not strong.

"Darn Me if I couldn't eat 'em," said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, "and if I han't half a mind to't!"

I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't, and held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly to keep myself upon it; partly to keep myself from crying.

"Now lookee here!" said the man. "Where's your mother?"

"There, sir!" said I.

He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.

"There, sir!" I timidly explained. "Also Georgiana. That's my mother."

"Oh!" said he, coming back. "And is that your father alonger your mother?"

"Yes, sir," said I; "him too; late of this parish."

"Ha!" he muttered then, considering. "Who d'ye live with — supposing you're kindly let to live, which I han't made up my mind about?"

"My sister, sir — Mrs. Joe Gargery — wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir."

"Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg.

After darkly looking at his leg and at me several times, he came closer to my tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his.

"Now lookee here," he said, "the question being whether you're to be let to live. You know what a file is?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you know what wittles is?"

"Yes, sir."

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

"You get me a file." He tilted me again. "And you get me wittles." He tilted me again. "You bring 'em both to me." He tilted me again. "Or I'll have your heart and liver out." He tilted me again.

I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands, and said, "If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps I could attend more."

He gave me a most tremendous dip and roll, so that the church jumped over its own weathercock. Then, he held me by the arms in an upright position on the top of the stone, and went on in these fearful terms.—

"You bring me, to-morrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to me, at that old Battery over yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted, and ate. Now, I ain't alone, as you may think I am. There's a young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a secret way pecooliar to himself of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think himself comfortable and safe, but that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him and tear him open. I am a keeping that

young man from harming of you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it wery hard to hold that young man off of your inside. Now what do you say?"

I said that I would get him the file, and I would get him what broken bits of food I could, and I would come to him at the Battery, early in the morning.

"Say, Lord strike you dead if you don't!" said the man.

I said so, and he took me down.

"Now," he pursued, "you remember what you've undertook, and you remember that young man, and you get home!"

"Goo-good night, sir," I faltered.

"Much of that!" said he, glancing about him over the cold, wet flat. "I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!"

At the same time he hugged his shuddering body in both his arms—clasping himself, as if to hold himself together—and limped towards the low church wall. As I saw him go, picking his way among the nettles, and among the brambles that bound the green mounds, he looked in my young eyes as if he were eluding the hands of the dead people, stretching up cautiously out of their graves, to get a twist upon his ankle and pull him in.

When he came to the low church wall, he got over it, like a man whose legs were numbed and stiff, and then turned round to look for me. When I saw him turning, I set my face towards home, and made the best use of my legs. But presently I looked over my shoulder, and saw him going on again towards the river, still hugging himself in both arms, and picking his way with his sore feet among the great stones dropped into the marshes here and there for stepping places when the rains were heavy, or the tide was in.

The marshes were just a long black horizontal line then, as I stopped to look after him; and the river was just another horizontal line, not nearly so broad nor yet so black; and the sky was just a row of long angry red lines and dense black lines intermixed. On the edge of the river I could faintly make out the only two black things in all the prospect that seemed to be standing upright: one of these was the beacon by which the sailors steered,—like an unhooped cask upon a pole,—an ugly thing when you were near it; the other a gibbet, with some chains hanging to it which had once held a pirate. The man was limping on towards this latter, as if he were the pirate come to life, and come down, and going back to hook



DICKENS' LIBRARY, GADSHILL

himself up again. It gave me a terrible turn when I thought so; and as I saw the cattle lifting their heads to gaze after him, I wondered whether they thought so too. I looked all round for the horrible young man, and could see no signs of him. But now I was frightened again, and ran home without stopping.

COPPERFIELD AT SCHOOL.

BY CHARLES DICKENS

[Probably a not incorrect picture of life at a private school about 1825.]

MY "FIRST HALF" AT SALEM HOUSE.

SCHOOL began in earnest next day. A profound impression was made upon me, I remember, by the roar of voices in the schoolroom suddenly becoming hushed as death when Mr. Creakle entered after breakfast, and stood in the doorway looking round upon us like a giant in a story book surveying his captives.

Tungay stood at Mr. Creakle's elbow. He had no occasion, I thought, to cry out "Silence!" so ferociously, for the boys were all struck speechless and motionless.

Mr. Creakle was seen to speak, and Tungay was heard to this effect.

"Now, boys, this is a new half. Take care what you're about in this new half. Come fresh up to the lessons, I advise you, for I come fresh up to the punishment. I won't flinch. It will be of no use your rubbing yourselves; you won't rub the marks out that I shall give you. Now get to work, every boy!"

When this dreadful exordium was over, and Tungay had stumped out again, Mr. Creakle came to where I sat, and told me that if I were famous for biting, he was famous for biting, too. He then showed me the cane, and asked me what I thought of *that* for a tooth? Was it a sharp tooth, hey? Was it a double tooth, hey? Had it a deep prong, hey? Did it bite, hey? Did it bite? At every question he gave me a fleshy cut with it that made me writhe; so I was very soon made free of Salem House (as Steerforth said), and was very soon in tears also.

Not that I mean to say these were special marks of distinction, which only I received. On the contrary, a large majority of the boys (especially the smaller ones) were visited with similar instances of notice, as Mr. Creakle made the round of the schoolroom. Half the establishment was writhing and crying, before the day's work began; and how much of it had writhed and cried before the day's work was over, I am really afraid to recollect, lest I should seem to exaggerate.

I should think there never can have been a man who enjoyed his profession more than Mr. Creakle did. He had a delight in cutting at the boys, which was like the satisfaction of a craving appetite. I am confident that he couldn't resist a chubby boy, especially; that there was a fascination in such a subject, which made him restless in his mind, until he had scored and marked him for the day. I was chubby myself, and ought to know. I am sure when I think of the fellow now, my blood rises against him with the disinterested indignation I should feel if I could have known all about him without having ever been in his power; but it rises hotly, because I know him to have been an incapable brute, who had no more right to be possessed of the great trust he held, than to be the Lord High Admiral, or Commander in Chief — in either of which capacities, it is probable, that he would have done infinitely less mischief.

Miserable little propitiators of a remorseless Idol, how abject we were to him! What a launch in life I think it now, on looking back, to be so mean and servile to a man of such parts and pretensions!

Here I sit at the desk again, watching his eye — humbly watching his eye, as he rules a ciphering book for another victim whose hands have just been flattened by that identical ruler, and who is trying to wipe the sting out with a pocket handkerchief. I have plenty to do. I don't watch his eye in idleness, but because I am morbidly attracted to it, in a dread desire to know what he will do next, and whether it will be my turn to suffer, or somebody else's. A lane of small boys beyond me, with the same interest in his eye, watch it too. I think he knows it, though he pretends he don't. He makes dreadful mouths as he rules the ciphering book; and now he throws his eye sideways down our lane, and we all droop over our books and tremble. A moment afterwards we are again eying him. An unhappy culprit, found guilty of imperfect

exercise, approaches at his command. The culprit falters excuses, and professes a determination to do better to-morrow. Mr. Creakle cuts a joke before he beats him, and we laugh at it — miserable little dogs, we laugh, with our visages as white as ashes, and our hearts sinking into our boots.

Here I sit at the desk again, on a drowsy summer afternoon. A buzz and hum go up around me, as if the boys were so many blue bottles. A cloggy sensation of the lukewarm fat of meat is upon me (we dined an hour or two ago), and my head is as heavy as so much lead. I would give the world to go to sleep. I sit with my eye on Mr. Creakle, blinking at him like a young owl; when sleep overpowers me for a minute, he still looms through my slumber, ruling those ciphering books, until he slowly comes behind me and wakes me to plainer perception of him, with a red ridge across my back.

Here I am in the playground, with my eye still fascinated by him, though I can't see him. The window at a little distance from which I know he is having his dinner stands for him, and I eye that instead. If he shows his face near it, mine assumes an imploring and submissive expression. If he looks out through the glass, the boldest boy (Steerforth excepted) stops in the middle of a shout or yell, and becomes contemplative. One day, Traddles (the most unfortunate boy in the world) breaks that window accidentally with a ball. I shudder at this moment with the tremendous sensation of seeing it done, and feeling that the ball had bounded on to Mr. Creakle's sacred head.

Poor Traddles! In a tight sky-blue suit that made his arms and legs like German sausages, or roly-poly puddings, he was the merriest and most miserable of all the boys. He was always being caned — I think he was caned every day that half year, except one holiday Monday when he was only rulered on both hands — and was always going to write to his uncle about it, and never did. After laying his head on the desk for a little while, he would cheer up somehow, begin to laugh again, and draw skeletons all over his slate before his eyes were dry. I used at first to wonder what comfort Traddles found in drawing skeletons, and for some time looked upon him as a sort of hermit, who reminded himself by those symbols of mortality that caning couldn't last forever. But I believe he only did it because they were easy, and didn't want any features.

He was very honorable, Traddles was, and held it as a

solemn duty in the boys to stand by one another. He suffered for this on several occasions; and particularly once, when Steerforth laughed in church, and the Beadle thought it was Traddles, and took him out. I see him now, going away in custody, despised by the congregation. He never said who was the real offender, though he smarted for it next day, and was imprisoned so many hours that he came forth with a whole churchyardful of skeletons swarming all over his Latin Dictionary. But he had his reward. Steerforth said there was nothing of the sneak in Traddles, and we all felt that to be the highest praise. For my part, I could have gone through a good deal (though I was much less brave than Traddles, and nothing like so old) to have won such a recompense.

To see Steerforth walk to church before us, arm in arm with Miss Creakle, was one of the great sights of my life. I didn't think Miss Creakle equal to little Em'ly in point of beauty, and I didn't love her (I didn't dare); but I thought her a young lady of extraordinary attractions, and in point of gentility not to be surpassed. When Steerforth, in white trousers, carried her parasol for her, I felt proud to know him; and believed that she could not choose but adore him with all her heart. Mr. Sharp and Mr. Mell were both noted personages in my eyes; but Steerforth was to them what the sun was to two stars.

Steerforth continued his protection of me, and proved a very useful friend, since nobody dared to annoy one whom he honored with his countenance. He couldn't—or at all events he didn't—defend me from Mr. Creakle, who was very severe with me; but whenever I had been treated worse than usual, he always told me that I wanted a little of his pluck, and that he wouldn't have stood it himself; which I felt he intended for encouragement, and considered to be very kind of him. There was one advantage, and only one that I know of, in Mr. Creakle's severity. He found my placard in his way when he came up or down behind the form on which I sat, and wanted to make a cut at me in passing; for this reason it was soon taken off, and I saw it no more.

An accidental circumstance cemented the intimacy between Steerforth and me in a manner that inspired me with great pride and satisfaction, though it sometimes led to inconvenience. It happened on one occasion, when he was doing me the honor of talking to me in the playground, that I hazarded the obser-

vation that something or somebody — I forget what now — was like something or somebody in "Peregrine Pickle." He said nothing at the time, but when I was going to bed at night, asked me if I had got that book?

I told him no, and explained how it was that I had read it, and all those other books of which I had made mention.

"And do you recollect them?" Steerforth said.

Oh, yes, I replied; I had a good memory, and I believed I recollected them very well.

"Then I tell you what, young Copperfield," said Steerforth, "you shall tell 'em to me. I can't get to sleep very early at night, and I generally wake rather early in the morning. We'll go over 'em one after another. We'll make some regular Arabian Nights of it."

I felt extremely flattered by this arrangement, and we commenced carrying it into execution that very evening. What ravages I committed on my favorite authors in the course of my interpretation of them I am not in a condition to say, and should be very unwilling to know; but I had a profound faith in them, and I had, to the best of my belief, a simple earnest manner of narrating what I did narrate; and these qualities went a long way.

The drawback was that I was often sleepy at night, or out of spirits and indisposed to resume the story, and then it was rather hard work, and it must be done; for to disappoint or to displease Steerforth was of course out of the question. In the morning, too, when I felt weary, and should have enjoyed another hour's repose very much, it was a tiresome thing to be roused, like Sultana Scheherazade, and forced into a long story before the getting-up bell rang; but Steerforth was resolute; and as he explained to me, in return, my sums and exercises, and anything in my tasks that was too hard for me, I was no loser by the transaction. Let me do myself justice, however. I was moved by no interested or selfish motive, nor was I moved by fear of him. I admired and loved him, and his approval was return enough. It was so precious to me that I look back on these trifles, now, with an aching heart.

Steerforth was considerate, too, and showed his consideration, in one particular instance, in an unflinching manner that was a little tantalizing, I suspect, to poor Traddles and the rest. Peggotty's promised letter—what a comfortable letter it was!—arrived before "the half" was many weeks old, and

with it a cake, in a perfect nest of oranges, and two bottles of cowslip wine. This treasure, as in duty bound, I laid at the feet of Steerforth, and begged him to dispense.

"Now, I'll tell you what, young Copperfield," said he; "the wine shall be kept to wet your whistle when you are story-telling."

I blushed at the idea, and begged him, in my modesty, not to think of it. But he said he had observed I was sometimes hoarse — a little roopy was his exact expression — and it should be, every drop, devoted to the purpose he had mentioned. Accordingly, it was locked up in his box, and drawn off by himself in a phial, and administered to me through a piece of quill in the cork, when I was supposed to be in want of a restorative. Sometimes, to make it a more sovereign specific, he was so kind as to squeeze orange juice into it, or to stir it up with ginger, or dissolve a peppermint drop in it; and although I cannot assert that the flavor was improved by these experiments, or that it was exactly the compound one would have chosen for a stomachic, the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning, I drank it gratefully, and was very sensible of his attention.

We seem, to me, to have been months over "Peregrine," and months more over the other stories. The institution never flagged for want of a story, I am certain, and the wine lasted out almost as well as the matter. Poor Traddles — I never think of that boy but with a strange disposition to laugh, and with tears in my eyes — was a sort of chorus in general, and affected to be convulsed with mirth at the comic parts, and to be overcome with fear when there was any passage of an alarming character in the narrative. This rather put me out, very often. It was a great jest of his, I recollect, to pretend that he couldn't keep his teeth from chattering, whenever mention was made of an Alguazil in connection with the adventures of Gil Blas; and I remember that when Gil Blas met the captain of the robbers in Madrid, this unlucky joker counterfeited such an ague of terror that he was overheard by Mr. Creakle, who was prowling about the passage, and handsomely flogged for disorderly conduct in the bedroom.

Whatever I had within me that was romantic and dreamy, was encouraged by so much story-telling in the dark; and in that respect the pursuit may not have been very profitable to me. But the being cherished as a kind of plaything in my

room, and the consciousness that this accomplishment of mine was bruited about among the boys, and attracted a good deal of notice to me though I was the youngest there, stimulated me to exertion. In a school carried on by sheer cruelty, whether it is presided over by a dunce or not, there is not likely to be much learnt. I believe our boys were, generally, as ignorant a set as any schoolboys in existence; they were too much troubled and knocked about to learn; they could no more do that to advantage than any one can do anything to advantage in a life of constant misfortune, torment, and worry.

THE DEATH OF DORA.

BY CHARLES DICKENS

ANOTHER RETROSPECT.

[Dora is Copperfield's first love and "child wife." Agnes is the guardian angel who is in love with him, though he does not know it. The piece is an example of Dickens' pathos, not in its most exuberant manifestation.]

THEY have left off telling me to "wait a few days more." I have begun to fear, remotely, that the day may never shine when I shall see my child wife running in the sunlight with her old friend Jip.

He is, as it were, suddenly grown very old. It may be that he misses in his mistress something that enlivened him and made him younger; but he mopes, and his sight is weak, and his limbs are feeble, and my aunt is sorry that he objects to her no more, but creeps near her as he lies on Dora's bed—she sitting at the bedside—and mildly licks her hand.

Dora lies smiling on us, and is beautiful, and utters no hasty or complaining word. She says that we are very good to her; that her dear old careful boy is tiring himself out, she knows; that my aunt has no sleep, yet is always wakeful, active, and kind. Sometimes, the little birdlike ladies come to see her; and then we talk about our wedding day, and all that happy time.

What a strange rest and pause in my life there seems to be—and in all life, within doors and without—when I sit in the quiet, shaded, orderly room, with the blue eyes of my child

wife turned towards me, and her little fingers twining round my hand! Many and many an hour I sit thus; but, of all those times, three times come the freshest on my mind.

It is morning; and Dora, made so trim by my aunt's hands, shows me how her pretty hair *will* curl upon the pillow yet, and how long and bright it is, and how she likes to have it loosely gathered in that net she wears.

"Not that I am vain of it, now, you mocking boy," she says, when I smile; "but because you used to say you thought it so beautiful; and because, when I first began to think about you, I used to peep in the glass, and wonder whether you would like very much to have a lock of it. Oh, what a foolish fellow you were, Doady, when I gave you one!"

"That was on the day when you were painting the flowers I had given you, Dora, and when I told you how much in love I was."

"Ah! but I didn't like to tell *you*," said Dora, "*then*, how I had cried over them, because I believed you really liked me! When I can run about again as I used to do, Doady, let us go and see those places where we were such a silly couple, shall we? And take some of the old walks? And not forget poor papa?"

"Yes, we will, and have some happy days. So you must make haste to get well, my dear."

"Oh, I shall soon do that! I am so much better, you don't know!"

It is evening; and I sit in the same chair, by the same bed, with the same face turned towards me. We have been silent, and there is a smile upon her face. I have ceased to carry my light burden up and down stairs now. She lies here all the day.

"Doady!"

"My dear Dora!"

"You won't think what I am going to say unreasonable after what you told me, such a little while ago, of Mr. Wickfield's not being well? I want to see Agnes. Very much I want to see her."

"I will write to her, my dear."

"Will you?"

"Directly."

"What a good, kind boy! Doady, take me on your arm. Indeed, my dear, it's not a whim. It's not a foolish fancy. I *want, very much indeed, to see her!*"

"I am certain of it. I have only to tell her so, and she is sure to come."

"You are very lonely when you go downstairs, now?" Dora whispers, with her arm about my neck.

"How can I be otherwise, my own love, when I see your empty chair?"

"My empty chair!" She clings to me for a little while in silence. "And you really miss me, Doady?" looking up, and brightly smiling. "Even poor, giddy, stupid me?"

"My heart, who is there upon earth that I could miss so much?"

"Oh, husband! I am so glad, yet so sorry!" creeping closer to me, and folding me in both her arms. She laughs and sobs, and then is quiet, and quite happy.

"Quite!" she says. "Only give Agnes my dear love, and tell her that I want very, very much to see her; and I have nothing left to wish for."

"Except to get well again, Dora."

"Ah, Doady! Sometimes I think—you know I always was a silly little thing!—that that will never be!"

"Don't say so, Dora! Dearest love, don't think so!"

"I won't, if I can help it, Doady. But I am very happy; though my dear boy is so lonely by himself, before his child wife's empty chair!"

It is night; and I am with her still. Agnes has arrived; has been among us for a whole day and an evening. She, my aunt, and I have sat with Dora since the morning, all together. We have not talked much, but Dora has been perfectly contented and cheerful. We are now alone.

Do I know, now, that my child wife will soon leave me? They have told me so; they have told me nothing new to my thoughts; but I am far from sure that I have taken that truth to heart. I cannot master it. I have withdrawn by myself, many times to-day, to weep. I have remembered Who wept for a parting between the living and the dead. I have bethought me of all that gracious and compassionate history. I have tried to resign myself, and to console myself; and that, I hope, I may have done imperfectly; but what I cannot firmly

settle in my mind is that the end will absolutely come. I hold her hand in mine, I hold her heart in mine, I see her love for me alive in all its strength. I cannot shut out a pale lingering shadow of belief that she will be spared.

"I am going to speak to you, Doady. I am going to say something I have often thought of saying, lately. You won't mind?" with a gentle look.

"Mind, my darling?"

"Because I don't know what you will think, or what you may have thought sometimes. Perhaps you have often thought the same. Doady, dear, I am afraid I was too young."

I lay my face upon the pillow by her, and she looks into my eyes and speaks very softly. Gradually, as she goes on, I feel, with a stricken heart, that she is speaking of herself as past.

"I am afraid, dear, I was too young. I don't mean in years only, but in experience, and thoughts, and everything. I was such a silly little creature! I am afraid it would have been better if we had only loved each other as a boy and girl, and forgotten it. I have begun to think I was not fit to be a wife."

I try to stay my tears, and to reply, "Oh, Dora, love, as fit as I to be a husband!"

"I don't know," with the old shake of her curls. "Perhaps! But, if I had been more fit to be married, I might have made you more so, too. Besides, you are very clever, and I never was."

"We have been very happy, my sweet Dora."

"I was very happy, very. But, as years went on, my dear boy would have wearied of his child wife. She would have been less and less a companion for him. He would have been more and more sensible of what was wanting in his home. She wouldn't have improved. It is better as it is."

"Oh, Dora, dearest, dearest, do not speak to me so. Every word seems a reproach!"

"No, not a syllable!" she answers, kissing me. "Oh, my dear, you never deserved it, and I loved you far too well to say a reproachful word to you in earnest—it was all the merit I had, except being pretty—or you thought me so. Is it lonely downstairs, Doady?"

"Very! Very!"

"Don't cry! Is my chair there?"

"In its old place."

"Oh, how my poor boy cries! Hush, hush! Now, make



"I sit down by the fire"

me one promise. I want to speak to Agnes. When you go downstairs, tell Agnes so, and send her up to me; and while I speak to her, let no one come — not even aunt. I want to speak to Agnes by herself. I want to speak to Agnes, quite alone."

I promise that she shall, immediately; but I cannot leave her for my grief.

"I said that it was better as it is!" she whispers, as she holds me in her arms. "Oh, Doady, after more years, you never could have loved your child wife better than you do; and, after more years, she would so have tried and disappointed you, that you might not have been able to love her half so well! I know I was too young and foolish. It is much better as it is!"

Agnes is downstairs, when I go into the parlor; and I give her the message. She disappears, leaving me alone with Jip.

His Chinese house is by the fire; and he lies within it, on his bed of flannel, querulously trying to sleep. The bright moon is high and clear. As I look out on the night, my tears fall fast, and my undisciplined heart is chastened heavily — heavily.

I sit down by the fire, thinking with a blind remorse of all those secret feelings I have nourished since my marriage. I think of every little trifle between me and Dora, and feel the truth, that trifles make the sum of life. Ever rising from the sea of my remembrance, is the image of the dear child as I knew her first, graced by my young love, and by her own, with every fascination wherein such love is rich. Would it, indeed, have been better if we had loved each other as a boy and girl, and forgotten it? Undisciplined heart, reply!

How the time wears, I know not; until I am recalled by my child wife's old companion. More restless than he was, he crawls out of his house, and looks at me, and wanders to the door, and whines to go upstairs.

"Not to-night, Jip! Not to-night!"

He comes very slowly back to me, licks my hand, and lifts his dim eyes to my face.

"Oh, Jip! It may be, never again!"

He lies down at my feet, stretches himself out as if to sleep, and with a plaintive cry is dead.

"Oh, Agnes! Look, look, here!"

—That face, so full of pity and of grief, that rain of tears, that awful mute appeal to me, that solemn hand upraised towards Heaven!

"Agnes!"

It is over. Darkness comes before my eyes; and, for a time, all things are blotted out of my remembrance.



THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF LINCOLNSHIRE.[1]

By JEAN INGELOW

[JEAN INGELOW, a popular English poet and novelist, was born in 1830 at Boston, Lincolnshire, where her father was a banker. Her first book, "A Rhyming Chronicle of Incidents and Feelings" (1850), was published anonymously, and her second, "Poems" (1863), which included "The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire," attained instant success. Later works are. "A Story of Doom," collected poems; "Poems of the Old Days and the New", and the novels "Off the Skelligs," "Fated to be Free," "Don John," and "Sarah de Berenger." Miss Ingelow died at Kensington, July 19. 1897.]

THE old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
  The ringers ran by two, by three;
"Pull, if you never pulled before;
  Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
"Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells!
Ply all your changes, all your swells
  Play uppe 'The Brides of Enderby.'"

Men say it was a stolen tyde —
  The Lord that sent it, He knows all;
But in myne ears doth still abide
  The message that the bells let fall
And there was naught of strange, beside
The flights of mews and peewits pied
  By millions crouched on the old sea wall

I sate and spun within the doore,
  My thread brake off, I raised myne eyes —
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
  Lay sinking in the barren skies,
And dark against day's golden death
She moved where Lindis wandereth,
My sonne's faire wife, Elizabeth

[1] By permission of B Ingelow and Longmans, Green & Co.



JEAN INGELOW

From a photo by Elliott & Fry

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews were falling,
  Farre away I heard her song.
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along
Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
      Floweth, floweth,
From the meads where melick groweth
Faintly came her milking song —

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
"For the dews will soone be falling;
  Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
      Mellow, mellow;
  Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow,
Come uppe Whitefoot, come uppe Lightfoot;
  Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
      Hollow, hollow;
  Come uppe Jetty, rise and follow,
From the clovers lift your head;
  Come uppe Whitefoot, come uppe Lightfoot,
Come uppe Jetty, rise and follow,
  Jetty, to the milking shed."

If it be long, aye, long ago,
  When I beginne to think howe long,
Againe I hear the Lindis flow,
  Swift as an arrowe, sharpe and strong;
And all the aire, it seemeth mee,
Bin full of floating bells (sayth shee),
That ring the tune of Enderby.

All fresh the level pasture lay,
  And not a shadowe mote be seene,
Save where full fyve good miles away
  The steeple towered from out the greene.
And lo! the great bell farre and wide
Was heard in all the countryside
That Saturday at eventide

The swannerds where their sedges are
  Moved on in sunset's golden breath,
The shepherde lads I heard afarre,
  And my sonne's wife, Elizabeth,
Till, floating o'er the grassy sea
Came down that kyndly message free,
The "Brides of Mavis Enderby."

I shall never hear her more
By the reedy Lindis shore,
"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews be falling,
I shall never hear her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along,
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
Goeth, floweth;
From the meads where melick groweth,
Where the water, winding down,
Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver,
Shiver, quiver;
Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling
To the sandy, lonesome shore;
I shall never hear her calling,
"Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow,
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe Whitefoot, come uppe Lightfoot;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow,
Come uppe Lightfoot, rise and follow;
Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
From your clovers lift your head;
Come uppe Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed"



THE DOLLY DIALOGUES.[1]

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

[ANTHONY HOPE HAWKINS, better known by his pen name of Anthony Hope, was born at Hackney, February 9, 1863, son of the Rev. E C Hawkins, vicar of St Bride's, Fleet Street From Marlborough College he proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford, where he took several prizes for scholarship, in 1887 was admitted to the bar at the Middle Temple, and practiced for several years in London and vicinity, his leisure hours being employed in literary work Encouraged by the success of his romantic novel, "The Prisoner of Zenda," he gave up the bar in 1894 and now devotes himself entirely to authorship Besides the above-named work, he has written "A Man of Mark," "Father

[1] By permission of Author and the "Westminster Gazette"



ANTHONY HOPE HAWKINS

Stafford," "Sport Royal" "A Change of Air," "The God in the Car," "The Dolly Dialogues," "The Heart of the Princess Osra," "Phroso," "Rupert of Hentzau" (a sequel to "The Prisoner of Zenda").]

My Last Chance.

"Now mind," said Mrs. Hilary Musgrave, impressively, "this is the last time I shall take any trouble about you. She's a very nice girl, quite pretty, and she'll have a lot of money. You can be very pleasant when you like——"

"This unsolicited testimonial——"

"Which isn't often—and if you don't do it this time I wash my hands of you. Why, how old are you?"

"Hush, Mrs. Hilary."

"You must be nearly——"

"It's false—false—false!"

"Come along," said Mrs. Hilary; and she added, over her shoulder, "She has a slight north-country accent."

"It might have been Scotch," said I.

"She plays the piano a good deal."

"It might have been the fiddle," said I.

"She's very fond of Browning."

"It might have been Ibsen," said I.

Mrs. Hilary, seeing that I was determined to look on the bright side, smiled graciously on me and introduced me to the young lady. She was decidedly good-looking, fresh and sincere of aspect, with large inquiring eyes—eyes which I felt would demand a little too much of me at breakfast—but then a large tea urn puts that all right.

"Miss Sophia Milton—Mr. Carter," said Mrs. Hilary, and left us.

Well, we tried the theaters first; but as she had only been to the Lyceum and I had only been to the Gaiety, we soon got to the end of that. Then we tried Art: she asked me what I thought of Degas: I evaded the question by criticising a drawing of a horse in last week's *Punch*—which she hadn't seen. Upon this she started literature. She said "Some Qualms and a Shiver" was the book of the season. I put my money on "The Queen of the Quorn." Dead stop again! And I saw Mrs. Hilary's eye upon me; there was wrath in her face. Something must be done. A brilliant idea seized me. I had read that four fifths of the culture of England were Conservative. I also was a Conservative. It was four to one on! I

started politics. I could have whooped for joy when I elicited something particularly incisive about the ignorance of the masses.

"I do hope you agree with me," said Miss Milton. "The more one reads and thinks, the more one sees how fatally false a theory it is that the ignorant masses—people such as I have described—can ever rule a great Empire."

"The Empire wants gentlemen; that's what it wants," said I, nodding my head, and glancing triumphantly at Mrs. Hilary.

"Men and women," said she, "who are acquainted with the best that has been said and thought on all important subjects."

At the time I believed this observation to be original, but I have since been told that it was borrowed. I was delighted with it.

"Yes," said I, "and have got a stake in the country, you know, and know how to behave 'emselves in the House, don't you know?"

"What we have to do," pursued Miss Milton, "is to guide the voters. These poor rustics need to be informed——"

"Just so," I broke in. "They have to be told——"

"Of the real nature of the questions——"

"And which candidate to support."

"Or they must infallibly——" she exclaimed.

"Get their marching orders," I cried in rapture. It was exactly what I always did on my small property.

"Oh, I didn't quite mean that," she said reproachfully.

"Oh, well, neither did I—quite," I responded adroitly. What was wrong with the girl now?

"But with the help of the League——" she went on.

"Do you belong?" I cried, more delighted than ever.

"O, yes!" said she. "I think it's a duty. I worked very hard at the last election. I spent days distributing packages of——"

Then I made, I'm sorry to say, a false step. I observed, interrupting:—

"But it's ticklish work now, eh? Six months' 'hard' wouldn't be pleasant, would it?"

"What do you mean, Mr.—er Carter?" she asked.

I was still blind. I believe I winked, and I'm sure I whispered "*Tea.*"

Miss Milton drew herself up very straight.

"I do not *bribe*," she said. "What I distribute is pamphlets."

Now I suppose that "pamphlets" and "blankets" don't really sound much alike, but I was agitated.

"Quite right," said I. "Poor old things! They can't afford proper fuel."

She rose to her feet.

"I was not joking," she said with horrible severity.

"Neither was I," I declared in humble apology. "Didn't you say 'blankets'?"

"*Pamphlets.*"

"Oh!"

There was a long pause. I glanced at Mrs. Hilary. Things had not fallen out as happily as they might, but I did not mean to give up yet.

"I see you're right," I said, still humbly. "To descend to such means as I had in my mind is ——"

"To throw away our true weapons," said she, earnestly. (She sat down again — good sign.)

"What we really need ——" I began.

"Is a reform of the upper classes," said she. "Let them give an example of duty, of self-denial, of frugality."

I was not to be caught out again.

"Just what I always say," I observed impressively.

"Let them put away their horse racing, their betting, their luxurious living, their ——"

"You're right, Miss Milton," said I.

"Let them set an example of morality."

"They should," I assented.

Miss Milton smiled.

"I thought we agreed really," said she.

"I'm sure we do," cried I; and I winked with my "off" eye at Mrs. Hilary as I sat down beside Miss Milton.

"Now I heard of a man the other day," said she, "who's nearly forty. He's got an estate in the country. He never goes there, except for a few days' shooting. He lives in town. He spends too much. He passes an absolutely vacant existence in a round of empty gayety. He has by no means a good reputation. He dangles about, wasting his time and his money. Is that the sort of example ——"

"He's a traitor to his class," said I, warmly.

"If you want him, you must look on a race course, or at a tailor's, or in some fashionable woman's boudoir. And his

estate looks after itself. He's too selfish to marry, too idle to work, too silly to think."

I began to be sorry for this man, in spite of his peccadillos.

"I wonder if I've met him," said I. "I'm occasionally in town, when I can get time to run up. What's his name?"

"I don't think I heard — or I've forgotten. But he's got the place next to a friend of mine in the country, and she told me all about him. She's exactly the opposite sort of person — or she wouldn't be my friend."

"I should think not, Miss Milton," said I, admiringly.

"Oh, I should like to meet that man, and tell him what I think of him!" said she. "Such men as he is do more harm than a dozen agitators. So contemptible, too!"

"It's revolting to think of," said I.

"I'm *so* glad you ——" began Miss Milton, quite confidentially; I pulled my chair a trifle closer, and cast an apparently careless glance towards Mrs. Hilary. Suddenly I heard a voice behind me.

"Eh, what? Upon my honor it is! Why, Carter, my boy, how are you? Eh, what? Miss Milton, too, I declare! Well, now, what a pity Annie didn't come!"

I disagreed. I hate Annie. But I was very glad to see my friend and neighbor, Robert Dinnerly. He's a sensible man — his wife's a little prig.

"Oh, Mr. Dinnerly," cried Miss Milton, "how funny that you should come just now! I was just trying to remember the name of a man Mrs. Dinnerly told me about. I was telling Mr. Carter about him. You know him."

"Well, Miss Milton, perhaps I do. Describe him."

"I don't believe Annie ever told me his name, but she was talking about him at our house yesterday."

"But I wasn't there, Miss Milton."

"No," said Miss Milton, "but he's got the next place to yours in the country."

I positively leaped from my seat.

"Why, good gracious, Carter himself, you mean!" cried Dinnerly, laughing. "Well, that is a good 'un — ha-ha-ha!"

She turned a stony glare on me.

"Do you live next to Mr. Dinnerly in the country?" she asked.

I would have denied it if Dinnerly had not been there. As it was I blew my nose.

"I wonder," said Miss Milton, "what has become of Aunt Emily."

"Miss Milton," said I, "by a happy chance you have enjoyed a luxury. You have told the man what you think of him."

"Yes," said she; "and I have only to add that he is also a hypocrite."

Pleasant, wasn't it? Yet Mrs. Hilary says it was my fault. That's a woman all over!

A VERY DULL AFFAIR.

"To hear you talk," remarked Mrs. Hilary Musgrave, "one would think that there was no such thing as real love."

She paused. I smiled.

"Now," she continued, turning a fine but scornful eye upon me, "I have never cared for any man in the world except my husband."

I smiled again. Poor Hilary looked very uncomfortable. With an apologetic air he began to stammer something about Parish Councils. I was not to be diverted by any such maneuver. It was impossible that he could really wish to talk on that subject.

"Would a person who had never eaten anything but beef make a boast of it?" I asked

Hilary grinned covertly. Mrs. Hilary pulled the lamp nearer, and took up her embroidery.

"Do you always work the same pattern?" said I.

Hilary kicked me gently. Mrs. Hilary made no direct reply, but presently she began to talk.

"I was just about Phyllis' age—(by the way, little Miss Phyllis was there)—when I first saw Hilary. You remember, Hilary? At Bournemouth?"

"Oh—er—was it Bournemouth?" said Hilary, with much carelessness.

"I was on the pier," pursued Mrs. Hilary. "I had a red frock on, I remember, and one of those big hats they wore that year. Hilary wore——"

"Blue serge," I interpolated encouragingly.

"Yes, blue serge," said she, fondly. "He had been yachting, and he was beautifully burnt. I was horribly burnt—wasn't I, Hilary?"

Hilary began to pat the dog.

"Then we got to know one another."

"Stop a minute," said I. "How did that happen?" Mrs. Hilary blushed.

"*Well, we were both always on the pier," she explained.* "And—and somehow Hilary got to know father, and—and father introduced him to me."

"I'm glad it was no worse," said I. I was considering Miss Phyllis, who sat listening, open-eyed.

"And then, you know, father wasn't always there; and once or twice we met on the cliff. Do you remember that morning, Hilary?"

"What morning?" asked Hilary, patting the dog with immense assiduity.

"Why, the morning I had my white serge on. I'd been bathing, and my hair was down to dry, and you said I looked like a mermaid."

"Do mermaids wear white serge?" I asked; but nobody took the least notice of me—quite properly.

"And you told me such a lot about yourself; and then we found we were late for lunch."

"Yes," said Hilary, suddenly forgetting the dog, "and your mother gave me an awful glance."

"Yes, and then you told me that you were very poor, but that you couldn't help it; and you said you supposed I couldn't possibly——"

"Well, I didn't think——"

"And I said you were a silly old thing; and then——" Mrs. Hilary stopped abruptly.

"How lovely," remarked little Miss Phyllis, in a wistful voice.

"And do you remember," pursued Mrs. Hilary, laying down her embroidery and clasping her hands on her knees, "the morning you went to see father?"

"What a row there was!" said Hilary.

"And what an awful week it was after that! I was never so miserable in all my life. I cried till my eyes were quite red, and then I bathed them for an hour, and then I went to the pier, and you were there—and I mightn't speak to you!"

"I remember," said Hilary, nodding gently.

"And then, Hilary, father sent for me and told me it was no use; and I said I'd never marry any one else. And

father said, 'There, there, don't cry. We'll see what mother says.'"

"Your mother was a brick," said Hilary, poking the fire.

"And that night—they never told me anything about it, and I didn't even change my frock, but came down, looking horrible, just as I was, in an old black rag— No, Hilary, don't say it was pretty!"

Hilary, unconvinced, shook his head.

"And when I walked into the drawing-room there was nobody there but just you; and we neither of us said anything for ever so long. And then father and mother came in and—do you remember after dinner, Hilary?"

"I remember," said Hilary.

There was a long pause. Mrs. Hilary was looking into the fire; little Miss Phyllis' eyes were fixed, in rapt gaze, on the ceiling; Hilary was looking at his wife—I, thinking it safest, was regarding my own boots.

At last Miss Phyllis broke the silence.

"How perfectly lovely!" she said.

"Yes," said Mrs. Hilary. "And we were married three months afterwards."

"Tenth of June," said Hilary, reflectively.

"And we had the most charming little rooms in the world! Do you remember those first rooms, dear? So tiny!"

"Not bad little rooms," said Hilary.

"How awfully lovely," cried little Miss Phyllis.

I felt that it was time to interfere.

"And is that all?" I asked.

"All? How do you mean?" said Mrs. Hilary, with a slight start.

"Well, I mean, did nothing else happen? Weren't there any complications? Weren't there any more troubles, or any more opposition, or any misunderstandings, or anything?"

"No," said Mrs. Hilary.

"You never quarreled, or broke it off?"

"No."

"Nobody came between you?"

"No. It all went just perfectly. Why, of course it did."

"Hilary's people made themselves nasty, perhaps?" I suggested, with a ray of hope.

"They fell in love with her on the spot," said Hilary.

Then I rose and stood with my back to the fire.

"I do not know," I observed, "what Miss Phyllis thinks about it——"

"I think it was just perfect, Mr. Carter."

"But for my part, I can only say that I never heard of such a dull affair in all my life."

"*Dull!*" gasped Miss Phyllis.

"*Dull!*" murmured Mrs. Hilary.

"*Dull!*" chuckled Hilary.

"It was," said I, severely, "without a spark of interest from beginning to end. Such things happen by thousands. It's commonplaceness itself. I had some hopes when your father assumed a firm attitude, but——"

"Mother was such a dear," interrupted Mrs. Hilary.

"Just so. She gave away the whole situation. Then I *did* trust that Hilary would lose his place, or develop an old flame, or do something just a little interesting."

"It was a perfect time," said Mrs. Hilary.

"I wonder why in the world you told me about it," I pursued.

"I don't know why I did," said Mrs. Hilary, dreamily.

"The only possible excuse for an engagement like that," I observed, "is to be found in intense post-nuptial unhappiness."

Hilary rose, and advanced towards his wife.

"Your embroidery's falling on the floor," said he.

"Not a bit of it," said I.

"Yes, it is," he persisted; and he picked it up and gave it to her. Miss Phyllis smiled delightedly. Hilary had squeezed his wife's hand.

"Then we don't excuse it," said he.

I took out my watch. I was not finding much entertainment.

"Surely it's quite early, old man?" said Hilary.

"It's nearly eleven. We've spent half an hour on the thing," said I, peevishly, holding out my hand to my hostess.

"Oh, are you going? Good night, Mr. Carter."

I turned to Miss Phyllis.

"I hope you won't think all love affairs are like that," I said; but I saw her lips begin to shape into "lovely," and I hastily left the room.

Hilary came to help me on with my coat. He looked extremely apologetic, and very much ashamed of himself.

"Awfully sorry, old chap," said he, "that we bored you

with our reminiscences. I know, of course, that they can't be very interesting to other people. Women are so confoundedly romantic."

"Don't try that on with me," said I, much disgusted. "You were just as bad yourself."

He laughed, as he leant against the door.

"She did look ripping in that white frock," he said, "with her hair ——"

"Stop," said I, firmly. "She looked just like a lot of other girls."

"I'm hanged if she did!" said Hilary.

Then he glanced at me with a puzzled sort of expression.

"I say, old man, weren't you ever that way yourself?" he asked.

I hailed a hansom cab.

"Because, if you were, you know, you'd understand how a fellow remembers every ——"

"Good night," said I. "At least I suppose you're not coming to the club?"

"Well, I think not," said Hilary. "Ta-ta, old fellow. Sorry we bored you. Of course, if a man has never ——"

"Never!" I groaned. "A score of times!"

"Well, then, doesn't it ——?"

"No," said I. "It's just that that makes stories like yours so infernally ——"

"What?" asked Hilary; for I had paused to light a cigarette.

"Uninteresting," said I, getting into my cab.

The House Opposite.

We were talking over the sad case of young Algy Groom; I was explaining to Mrs. Hilary exactly what had happened.

"His father gave him," said I, "a hundred pounds, to keep him for three months in Paris while he learnt French."

"And very liberal too," said Mrs. Hilary.

"It depends where you dine," said I. "However, that question did not arise, for Algy went to the Grand Prix the day after he arrived ——"

"A *horse race?*" asked Mrs. Hilary, with great contempt.

"Certainly the competitors are horses," I rejoined. "And

there he, most unfortunately, lost the whole sum, without learning any French to speak of."

"How disgusting!" exclaimed Mrs. Hilary, and little Miss Phyllis gasped in horror.

"Oh, well," said Hilary, with much bravery (as it struck me), "his father's very well off."

"That doesn't make it a bit better," declared his wife.

"There's no mortal sin in a little betting, my dear. Boys will be boys——"

"And even that," I interposed, "wouldn't matter if we could only prevent girls from being girls."

Mrs. Hilary, taking no notice whatever of me, pronounced sentence. "He grossly deceived his father," she said, and took up her embroidery.

"Most of us have grossly deceived our parents before now," said I. "We should all have to confess to something of the sort."

"I hope you're speaking for your own sex," observed Mrs. Hilary.

"Not more than yours," said I. "You used to meet Hilary on the pier when your father wasn't there—you told me so."

"Father had authorized my acquaintance with Hilary."

"I hate quibbles," said I.

There was a pause. Mrs. Hilary stitched; Hilary observed that the day was fine.

"Now," I pursued carelessly, "even Miss Phyllis here has been known to deceive her parents."

"Oh, let the poor child alone, anyhow," said Mrs. Hilary.

"Haven't you?" said I to Miss Phyllis.

I expected an indignant denial. So did Mrs. Hilary, for she remarked with a sympathetic air:—

"Never mind his folly, Phyllis dear."

"Haven't you, Miss Phyllis?" said I.

Miss Phyllis grew very red. Fearing that I was causing her pain, I was about to observe on the prospects of a Dissolution, when a shy smile spread over Miss Phyllis' face.

"Yes, once," said she, with a timid glance at Mrs. Hilary, who immediately laid down her embroidery.

"Out with it," I cried triumphantly. "Come along, Miss Phyllis. We won't tell, honor bright!"

Miss Phyllis looked again at Mrs. Hilary. Mrs. Hilary is human.

"Well, Phyllis dear," said she, "after all this time I shouldn't think it my duty ——"

"It only happened last summer," said Miss Phyllis.

Mrs. Hilary looked rather put out.

"Still, ——" she began.

"We must have the story," said I.

Little Miss Phyllis put down the sock she had been knitting.

"I was very naughty," she remarked. "It was my last term at school."

"I know that age," said I to Hilary.

"My window looked out towards the street. You're sure you won't tell? Well, there was a house opposite ——"

"And a young man in it," said I.

"How did you know that?" asked Miss Phyllis, blushing immensely.

"No girls' school can keep up its numbers without one," I explained.

"Well, there was, anyhow," said Miss Phyllis. "And I and two other girls went to a course of lectures at the Town-hall on literature or something of that kind. We used to have a shilling given us for our tickets."

"Precisely," said I. "A hundred pounds!"

"No, a shilling," corrected Miss Phyllis. "A hundred pounds! How absurd, Mr. Carter! Well, one day I — I ——"

"You're sure you wish to go on, Phyllis?" asked Mrs. Hilary.

"You're afraid, Mrs. Hilary," said I, severely.

"Nonsense, Mr. Carter. I thought Phyllis might ——"

"I don't mind going on," said Miss Phyllis, smiling. "One day I — I lost the other girls."

"The other girls are always easy to lose," I observed.

"And on the way there — oh, you know, he went to the lectures."

"The young dog," said I, nudging Hilary. "I should think he did!"

"On the way there it became rather — rather foggy."

"Blessings on it!" I cried; for little Miss Phyllis' demure but roguish expression delighted me.

"And he — he found me in the fog."

"What are you doing, Mr. Carter?" cried Mrs. Hilary, angrily.

"Nothing, nothing," said I. I believe I had winked at Hilary.

"And — and we couldn't find the Townhall."

"Oh, Phyllis!" groaned Mrs. Hilary.

Little Miss Phyllis looked alarmed for a moment. Then she smiled.

"But we found the confectioner's," said she.

"The Grand Prix," said I, pointing my forefinger at Hilary.

"He had no money at all," said Miss Phyllis.

"It's ideal!" said I.

"And — and we had tea on — on ——"

"The shilling?" I cried in rapture.

"Yes," said little Miss Phyllis, "on the shilling. And he saw me home."

"Details, please," said I.

Little Miss Phyllis shook her head.

"And left me at the door."

"Was it still foggy?" I asked.

"Yes. Or he wouldn't have ——"

"Now what did he ——"

"Come to the door, Mr. Carter," said Miss Phyllis, with obvious wariness. "Oh, and it was such fun!"

"I'm sure it was."

"No, I mean when we were examined in the lectures. I bought the local paper, you know, and read it up, and I got top marks easily, and Miss Green wrote to mother to say how well I had done."

"It all ends most satisfactorily," I observed.

"Yes, didn't it?" said little Miss Phyllis.

Mrs. Hilary was grave again.

"And you never told your mother, Phyllis?" she asked.

"N-no, Cousin Mary," said Miss Phyllis.

I rose and stood with my back to the fire. Little Miss Phyllis took up her sock again, but a smile still played about the corners of her mouth.

"I wonder," said I, looking up at the ceiling, "what happened at the door." Then, as no one spoke, I added: —

"Pooh! I know what happened at the door."

"I'm not going to tell you anything more," said Miss Phyllis.

"But I should like to hear it in your own ——"

Miss Phyllis was gone! She had suddenly risen and run from the room!

"It did happen at the door," said I.

"Fancy Phyllis!" mused Mrs. Hilary.

"I hope," said I, "that it will be a lesson to you."

"I shall have to keep my eye on her," said Mrs. Hilary.

"You can't do it," said I, in easy confidence. I had no fear of little Miss Phyllis being done out of her recreations. "Meanwhile," I pursued, "the important thing is this: my parallel is obvious and complete."

"There's not the least likeness," said Mrs. Hilary, sharply.

"As a hundred pounds are to a shilling so is the Grand Prix to the young man opposite," I observed, taking my hat, and holding out my hand to Mrs. Hilary.

"I am very angry with you," she said. "You've made the child think there was nothing wrong in it."

"Oh! nonsense," said I. "Look how she enjoyed telling it."

Then, not heeding Mrs. Hilary, I launched into an apostrophe.

"O, divine House Opposite!" I cried. "Charming House Opposite! What is a man's own dull, uneventful home compared with that Glorious House Opposite! If only I might dwell forever in the House Opposite!"

"I haven't the least notion what you mean," remarked Mrs. Hilary, stiffly. "I suppose it's something silly — or worse."

I looked at her in some puzzle.

"Have you no longing for the House Opposite?" I asked.

Mrs. Hilary looked at me. Her eyes ceased to be absolutely blank. She put her arm through Hilary's and answered gently: —

"I don't want the House Opposite."

"Ah," said I, giving my hat a brush, "but maybe you remember the House — when it was Opposite?"

Mrs. Hilary, one arm still in Hilary's, gave me her hand. She blushed and smiled.

"Well," said she, "it was your fault; so I won't scold Phyllis."

"No, don't, my dear," said Hilary, with a laugh.

As for me, I went downstairs, and, in absence of mind, bade my cabman drive to the House Opposite. But I have never got there.

A Slight Mistake.

"I don't ask you for more than a guinea," said Mrs. Hilary, with a parade of forbearance.

"It would be the same," I replied politely, "if you asked me for a thousand;" with which I handed her half a crown. She held it in her open hand, regarding it scornfully.

"Yes," I continued, taking a seat, "I feel that pecuniary gifts ——"

"Half a crown!"

"Are a poor substitute for personal service. May not I accompany you to the ceremony?"

"I dare say you spent as much as this on wine with your lunch!"

"I was in a mad mood to-day," I answered apologetically. "What are they taught at the school?"

"Above all, to be good girls," said Mrs. Hilary, earnestly. "What are you sneering at, Mr. Carter?"

"Nothing," said I, hastily, and I added with a sigh, "I suppose it's all right."

"I should like," said Mrs. Hilary, meditatively, "if I had not other duties, to dedicate my life to the service of girls."

"I should think twice about that, if I were you," said I, shaking my head.

"By the way, Mr. Carter, I don't know if I've ever spoken unkindly of Lady Mickleham. I hope not."

"Hope," said I, "is not yet taxed."

"If I have, I'm very sorry. She's been most kind in undertaking to give away the prizes to-day. There must be some good in her."

"Oh, don't be hasty," I implored.

"I always *wanted* to think well of her."

"Ah! Now I never did."

"And Lord Mickleham is coming, too. He'll be most useful."

"That settles it," I exclaimed. "I may not be an earl, but I have a perfect right to be useful. I'll go too."

"I wonder if you'll behave properly," said Mrs. Hilary, doubtfully.

I held out a half-sovereign, three half-crowns, and a shilling.

"Oh, well, you may come, since Hilary can't," said Mrs. Hilary.

"You mean he won't," I observed.

"He has always been prevented hitherto," said she, with dignity.

So I went, and it proved a most agreeable expedition. There were two hundred girls in blue frocks and white aprons (the girl three from the end of the fifth row was decidedly pretty) — a nice lot of prize books — the Micklehams (Dolly in demure black), ourselves, and the matron. All went well. Dolly gave away the prizes; Mrs. Hilary and Archie made little speeches. Then the matron came to me. I was sitting modestly at the back of the platform, a little distance behind the others.

"Mr. Musgrave," said the matron to me, "we're so glad to see you here at last. Won't you say a few words?"

"It would be a privilege," I responded cordially, "but unhappily I have a sore throat."

The matron (who was a most respectable woman) said, "Dear, dear!" but did not press the point. Evidently, however, she liked me, for when we went to have a cup of tea, she got me in a corner and began to tell me all about the work. It was extremely interesting. Then the matron observed: —

"And what an angel Mrs. Musgrave is!"

"Well, I should hardly call her that," said I, with a smile.

"Oh, you mustn't depreciate her — you, of all men!" cried the matron, with a somewhat ponderous archness. "Really I envy you her constant society."

"I assure you," said I, "I see very little of her."

"I beg your pardon?"

"I only go to the house about once a fortnight — Oh, it's not my fault. She won't have me there oftener."

"What do you mean? I beg your pardon. Perhaps I've touched on a painful —— "

"Not at all, not at all," said I, suavely. "It is very natural. I am neither young nor handsome, Mrs. Wiggins. I am not complaining."

The matron gazed at me.

"Only seeing her here," I pursued, "you have no idea of what she is at home. She has chosen to forbid me to come to her house —— "

"Her house?"

"It happens to be more hers than mine," I explained. "To

forbid me, I say, more than once to come to her house. No doubt she had her reasons."

"Nothing could justify it," said the matron, directing a wondering glance at Mrs. Hilary.

"Do not let us blame her," said I. "It is just an unfortunate accident. She is not as fond of me as I could wish, Mrs. Wiggins; and she is a great deal fonder than I could wish of ——"

I broke off. Mrs. Hilary was walking toward us. I think she was pleased to see me getting on so well with the matron, for she was smiling pleasantly. The matron wore a bewildered expression.

"I suppose," said Mrs. Hilary, "that you'll drive back with the Micklehams?"

"Unless you want me," said I, keeping a watchful eye on the matron.

"Oh, I don't want you," said Mrs. Hilary, lightly.

"You won't be alone this evening?" I asked anxiously.

Mrs. Hilary stared a little.

"O, no!" she said. "We shall have our usual party."

"May I come one day next week?" I asked humbly.

Mrs. Hilary thought for a moment.

"I'm so busy next week — come the week after," said she, giving me her hand.

"That's very unkind," said I.

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Hilary, and she added, "Mind you let me know when you're coming."

"I won't surprise you," I assured her, with a covert glance at the matron.

The excellent woman was quite red in the face, and could gasp out nothing but "Good-by," as Mrs. Hilary affectionately pressed her hand.

At this moment Dolly came up. She was alone.

"Where's Archie?" I asked.

"He's run away; he's got to meet somebody. I knew you'd see me home. Mrs. Hilary didn't want you, of course?"

"Of course not," said I, plaintively.

"Besides, you'd rather come with me, wouldn't you?" pursued Dolly, and she added pleasantly to the matron, "Mrs. Hilary's so down on him, you know."

"I'd much rather come with you," said I.

"We'll have a cozy drive all to ourselves," said Dolly,

"without husbands or wives or anything horrid. Isn't it nice to get rid of one's husband sometimes, Mrs. Wiggins?"

"I have the misfortune to be a widow, Lady Mickleham," said Mrs. Wiggins.

Dolly's eye rested upon her with an interested expression. I knew that she was about to ask Mrs. Wiggins whether she liked the condition of life, and I interposed hastily, with a sigh: —

"But *you* can look back on a happy marriage, Mrs. Wiggins?"

"I did my best to make it so," said she, stiffly.

"You're right," said I. "Even in the face of unkindness we should strive ——"

"My husband's not unkind," said Dolly.

"I didn't mean your husband," said I.

"What your poor wife would do if she cared a button for you, I don't know," observed Dolly.

"If I had a wife who cared for me, I should be a better man," said I, solemnly.

"But you'd probably be very dull," said Dolly. "And you wouldn't be allowed to drive with me."

"Perhaps it's all for the best," said I, brightening up. "Good-by, Mrs. Wiggins."

Dolly walked on. Mrs. Wiggins held my hand for a moment.

"Young man," said she, sternly, "are you sure it's not your own fault?"

"I'm not at all sure, Mrs. Wiggins," said I. "But don't be distressed about it. It's of no consequence. I don't let it make me unhappy. Good-by; so many thanks. Charming girls you have here — especially that one in the fifth — I mean, charming, all of them. Good-by."

I hastened to the carriage. Mrs. Wiggins stood and watched. I got in and sat down by Dolly.

"Oh, Mrs. Wiggins," said Dolly, dimpling, "don't tell Mrs. Hilary that Archie wasn't with us, or we shall get into trouble." And she added to me, "Are you all right?"

"Rather!" said I, appreciatively; and we drove off, leaving Mrs. Wiggins on her doorstep.

A fortnight later I went to call on Mrs. Hilary. After some conversation she remarked: —

"I'm going to the school again to-morrow."

"Really!" said I.

"And I'm so delighted — I've persuaded Hilary to come."

She paused, and then added: —

"You really seemed interested last time."

"Oh, I was."

"Would you like to come again to-morrow?"

"No, I think not, thanks," said I, carelessly.

"That's just like you!" she said severely. "You never do any real good, because you never stick to anything."

"There are some things one can't stick to," said I.

"Oh, nonsense!" said Mrs. Hilary.

But there are — and I didn't go.



ODE TO DUTY.

By WORDSWORTH.

Stern Daughter of the voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
O! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright
And happy will our nature be
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet find that other strength, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control,
But in the quietness of thought.
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance desires:
My hopes no more must change their name
I long for a repose which ever is the same.

Stern lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face.
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour,
O let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of Truth thy bondman let me live.

AND EVERY ONE A WINNER.

By WILLIAM LINDSEY.

(From "Cinder-Path Tales." By permission of Copeland & Day.)

[Mr. Lindsey, born in Boston in 1858, has written also "Apples of Astakhar."]

We are winners. The lobby of the hotel is crowded. Athletes, college men, travelers, and a curious public are well shuffled together. It is the same old pack of cards that I have seen for years, though the faces change. That "know-it-all" by the post is a new man, yet he is telling just how and why we won, like the wiseacres who preceded him, and the others who will follow; for this line of succession never runs out. He is telling how he has foreseen the result for weeks, and can call witnesses to prove his faultless prediction of six months ago. Yes, he can, though we only pulled out by the skin of our teeth, after sitting on the anxious seat all the afternoon; and had not Jim Harding thrown the hammer ten feet farther than ever before, we never should have won at all. But this only makes the "know-it-all's" wisdom more remarkable, and my ignorance as well, for I had thought the team a losing one, though I had, of course, held my tongue.

Bah! Thirty years have not reconciled me to this gentry, with the addled brains and brazen throats.

Most of the college men are gathered in little groups, around which the crowds ebb and flow in a surging tide. That its strongest current is through the swinging door of the bar-room cannot be denied, nor that it shows signs of the source from which it sprang. There are at least three grains of talk to one of listen, which is the regular dose, though the athletes pull the proportion down. They are, as usual, quietest of all. They have developed other muscles than those of the tongue; and yet even they are a bit talkative to-night, and have an unmistakably festive air about them.

After months of preparation and weeks of strict training, when rigid rules prohibit, and all the pleasant things of life seemed labeled "Keep off the grass," there is a maddening pleasure in being free again, — free to taste that favorite dish, palatable but indigestible; free to inhale the fragrance of a good cigar; free to watch the hands of the clock swing into

the small hours; free, as Harry Gardner expresses it, "to do as you darn please once more."

For those who have lost there is the necessity of drowning sorrow, and it is certainly the duty of a good winner to give his victory a fitting celebration. There is not as much difference in the two ceremonies as might be imagined.

Our team has broken training, and some of them are breaking it badly. There are the long summer months before them, with the leisure hours at seashore or mountains, and no more work until the cool winds of autumn begin to blow. Even those of the most regular habits are kicking over the traces, and some of the wilder spirits, that make a trainer's hair gray before its time, to whom the six months' restraint has been a galling yoke, are giving themselves very loose rein. I am sorry to say that this particular team has not a large percentage of either deacons or clergymen, though Jim Harding afterward took holy orders, became an honor to the cloth, and will some day be a bishop. I occasionally attend his church; and when I see his huge form at the desk, and hear his voice, powerful and earnest, as it echoes to the farthest corner, I wonder if he has forgotten the night when we looked for "Paddy's cousin, the copper," when "every one was a winner."

As I enter the hotel lobby, after dinner, on this evening of the games of 188–, I discover Jim standing near the street entrance with Harry Gardner, and a little knot of college friends and admirers. They are smoking like bad chimneys, and between puffs are giving a green reporter some most surprising bits of information, much to their own enjoyment and the delectation of their friends. The little reporter is taking copious notes, which will create a sensation in the morning, if the sporting editor does not discover them before they get into print. Jim is big and blond, and Harry slender and dark; the former has made a first in the "hammer throw"; the latter, after winning his trial heat in the "hundred" with ease, got away badly in the finals, and had to content himself with adding a single point to our score.

Now, Jim and Harry are particular friends of mine; I shall never handle them again, and I want a last word or two of farewell. They have developed under my care from awkward boys to the finished athletes they are to-night. I have seen the firm, round muscles becoming more and more perfect; the heart and lungs grow equal to more and more severe tests, and

the increasing courage and self-reliance (without which there can be no success on the cinder path) which will help them through many a struggle with the world they are about to enter. It is one of the sad parts of a trainer's life that he must lose such friends.

I force my way through the crowd, getting numberless nods and greetings of a warmer nature, for I am a well-known man in such a gathering. I strike the strong current flowing to and from the bar; but a little patience, and a liberal use of the elbow, brings me to the boys at last. I give them each a hand, and we exchange a word or two of congratulation. Harry is, I see, a bit sore at his misfortune, for he had been picked as a sure winner. I give him a word of praise for his gallant effort to make up a three-yard loss at the start. There are many sprinters who would not have tried at all, let alone have pulled off the much-needed point. I tell Harding, with assumed resentment, that he has been sogering all the time, abusing my confidence by playing the sleeper, and that he has always been good for the extra ten feet.

At this Jim gives one of his basso-profundo laughs, and in answer to my question as to what mischief he is plotting, replies that Harry and himself are waiting for Paddy, who has gone with Tom Furness for a little something "to kape the night out," and that they have promised the Irishman to help him look up his cousin "Dinny Sullivan, a copper."

I find that all they know about this cousin is that he is a policeman, on duty somewhere in the Bowery district. The boys admit the scent is not strong, but anticipate good sport in the hunt, whether they bag the game or not. There is always fun with Paddy, for though he has become a mighty knowing man on cinder path and track, and is not as green as when he tackled the "ghostly hurdler," he is a delicious bit still.

He appears a moment after, the "Knight of the Rake and Roller," accompanied by Tom; and judging from the aroma that clings to them, the necessary precautions have been taken against the baleful influences of the night air.

Tom is as happy and sanguine as ever, shakes me by the hand as if my arm was a pump handle in midsummer, and immediately protests that not a step will he take out of the house unless I go with him.

At this they all insist that the party will be incomplete without me. I must go, or I shall break up the party and spoil

sport. After considerable resistance, which I admit now was assumed, I consented at last. The truth was that, while I had not trained as had the boys, I had given many months of care and anxiety to them, and really wanted a bit of fling myself. I knew very well what the little walk would lead up to, but reasoned that the boys were bound to get into trouble, and that it would be a charity to look after them. In fact, I played the hypocrite in a way for which I should have been ashamed.

Although Tom and the boys gave unmistakable signs of "having dined," and Paddy of his heroic remedies against the night, we all meander to the bar for a last measure of precaution, light fresh cigars, and sally forth.

The clocks are striking eight as the door swings behind us, the stars are beginning to show, and the street lights to shine. The air is mild, and the pavements seem like a country road after the awful crowd of the lobby. The rattle of the pavements is silence compared with the rattle of tongues which we have left behind us.

We pile into a carriage which Paddy selects from a number drawn up to the curb,—because the driver is a Connemara man. We are not particularly comfortable with three on one seat, and five pairs of long legs interlaced; but our ride is enlivened by Paddy's conversation, no less brilliant than fluent, which is a magnificent compliment. Occasionally Tom succeeds in getting in a word, but the rest of us are out of it. He is about to give us some reminiscences of "Dinny's" boyhood, when the carriage stops, much to our surprise, for we do not realize the lapse of time.

We alight before a corner drug store, and Paddy calls the "Connemara man" an "Irish thief" when Tom pays him an exorbitant charge. He is easily placated, however, and goes into the store to inquire after Dinny, while we wait outside. We look through the window, between the red bottle on the right and the blue bottle on the left, and see him go up to the clerk at the soda fountain. The latter, a tall, pale-faced youth, answers shortly, and points to a big directory on a little shelf in the corner. Paddy walks over, upsetting a rack of sponges on the way, opens the directory doubtfully, turns over its leaves, runs his finger down a page or two, looks more and more puzzled, and at last beckons us in.

We enter, and find him looking blankly at an almost unending list of Dennis Sullivans, engaged in many occupations,

the stores open, the barrooms doing a rushing business, and the places of amusement in full blast.

Suddenly Jim stopped before the bulletin board of a little variety theater, and began to examine it critically. There was a long list of names in black letters,--singers, dancers, acrobats, boxers, and I know not what else; but Jim's eyes were fixed with great seriousness on the tall red letters at the bottom. They declared, in extremely mixed metaphor, "A Galaxy of Stars, and Every One a Winner."

"I'm going in," said Jim, with much gravity, throwing his cigar away.

"How about Paddy's cousin, the copper?" asked Harry.

"He's as likely here as anywhere," Jim answered; "beside, it says that 'every one's a winner,' and that's the only kind for us to-night."

We were all of us quite ready for a change, so we stepped into the little lobby, Paddy first going up to the ticket office to ask, "Is me cousin, Dinny Sullivan, the copper, inside?"

The ticket seller, a big, fat fellow, with weak eyes and a Roman nose, thought Paddy was trying to jolly him, and answered "No," quite tartly. Paddy, of course, resented the incivility, and declared himself to be a gentleman, and he cared not who knew it. He further ventured to doubt whether the man behind the window was in the same class with himself, and, gradually abandoning the reproachful accents with which he had begun, became first unparliamentary, and then abusive.

The ticket seller stood it for a while, and then told Paddy to pass along, that "Dinny Sullivan" was not inside, but that they had two other policemen who were no relation of Pat's, but would take care of him just the same.

This last threat raised Paddy's anger to the boiling point, so that he first tried unsuccessfully to enter through the locked door, and then reaching his huge fist through the little open place in the window, shook it as near the Roman nose as the length of his arm would permit.

We finally persuaded him to subside, and Harry took his place with a roll of bills to purchase the tickets. He had hardly begun to speak, however, before Harding caught him, and lifted him, despite his struggles, on to the shoulder of a big statue of Terpsichore, in the corner, reminding him, gently but firmly, that the invitation was his, and he must be permitted to pay the bills. He obtained five seats in the front

row of the orchestra, and parted therefor with two dollars and fifty cents.

We were inspected a trifle suspiciously by the doorkeeper, but filed in, and found the little theater filled with a numerous and enthusiastic audience. The gallery was packed, the cheap seats on the rear of the floor well taken, and only a few of the more expensive ones in the front of the house unoccupied. The air was hot, and full enough of the fumes of alcohol to burn. Before we had adjusted our lungs to the new conditions, a little fellow in a dirty zouave suit took the checks from Jim, and ushered us down the center aisle to our seats in the front row. We made considerable noise, for the steps were of uneven depths, and at unequal distances, and Paddy stumbled all over himself at every opportunity.

Harry went in first, followed by Pat, Tom, myself, and Jim, in the order named. We were obliged to squeeze by an old lady and her daughter who occupied the end seats, and the former, sitting next to Jim, resented the necessary crowding by sundry sniffs and looks of disgust. Her displeasure was so evident that Jim felt called upon to apologize, which he did in his most Grandisonian manner, and in tones not less loud than those of the singer on the stage, "I beg your pardon, madam; I assure you it was unintentional, I have tender feet myself, and can sympathize with you."

At this there was a burst of applause and laughter. I looked around and could see a number of college men scattered through the orchestra, evidently ready to encourage any exploit to which such "dare-devils" as Jim and Harry might treat them.

There were a few of the gentler sex in the audience, but the great majority were men, the flotsam and jetsam of the Bowery. Some of these joined in the laughter at Jim's elaborate apology, and others scowled their resentment at the disturbance. From the abode of the gallery gods (filled mostly with boys, big and little) came a shrill "Put 'em out!" and a big wad of paper composed of an entire *World*, and thrown by a skillful hand, which landed on the top of Jim's head

But Jim, apparently not at all noticing the attention which he was attracting, unfolded his playbill, and began to study it with the air of a connoisseur, or a provincial manager in search of talent. The document was headed with "BILLY JAYNE'S REFINED VAUDEVILLE CO.," and near the bottom of the

first page was bracketed, "Robert Loring, Basso Profundo, Nautical Songs, Without a Rival."

It was evidently Robert who was "doing his turn" when we entered, for his song told of "wild waves, brave ships, oak timbers, fearful storms, wrecks, and watery graves," in tones deep enough to make the heart quake. He ended, just as we were well settled in our seats, with a row of descending notes, the last several feet below the lowest brick of the cellar, and bowed himself off the stage, amid a burst of applause, which was followed by another demonstration, well mingled with laughter, when Jim remarked very audibly to the old lady by his side, "I really wonder how he does it," and "Shouldn't you think it would hurt him?"

Loring had already occupied the full time for "his turn" (we discovered later that the performer came out and filled up his ten minutes just the same, whether applauded and encored, or greeted with stony silence); so, notwithstanding vigorous clapping, assisted by the more demonstrative boot heel, Robert only made his bow from the wings, and departed.

As he disappeared on one side, a diminutive little darky hurried on from the other, and changed the cards, announcing as the next star, "Sam Walker." An examination of the play-bill rewarded us also with the information that Sam was the "World's Champion Clog Dancer, Lancashire Style." Two attendants in ragged costumes brought out a big square of white marble, which they deposited with considerable labor on one side of the stage, and after a little delay, to make the audience impatient, the distinguished Walker appeared, clad in well-chalked white tights, and with the champion's belt buckled round his waist. It was at least six inches wide, and so heavy with gold, silver, and precious stones that the redoubtable Sam was obliged to remove it before he could dance at all. Sam's brother Alfred, in a rusty dress suit, took his seat in a chair on the other side of the stage, and with an enormous accordeon furnished the music for the champion, who treated us to a continuation of festive taps, stopping with wonderful precision whenever the music broke off, even if in the middle of a note.

Next came "Annette Toineau," the "Queen of French Song, Fresh from Her Parisian Triumphs;" and the big man at the piano began to execute a lively tune, which set all the feet in the house in motion, until Annette herself appeared. This she did with a nod, a wink, and a kick that won instant applause,

even before she opened her mouth to sing. An enthusiastic admirer in the gallery called out, "You're all right, Liz, old girl," from which remark, and the accent (much more Celtic than French) with which she afterward treated us, I argued that Annette was but a stage name, and the "Parisian Triumphs" probably a fiction of the manager. Annette was a very pretty little girl, with a trim figure in abbreviated skirts, and she sang rather naughty songs in a manner that made them worse than they were written.

I could hear Jim, after she was through, remark to the old lady by his side, that such songs were likely to lead to the perversion of youth, and should not be sung except to those who had reached the age of discretion; by which I suppose he meant himself and the old lady, though she was old enough to be his grandmother. Jim's censorious remarks were, however, more than offset by Harry, who, at the other end of our line, applauded so vociferously that Annette rewarded him with a direct and beaming smile when she made her last bow.

Then followed "Leslie and Manning, Knock-about Grotesques," "Cora, the Queen of the Slack Wire," and "Sam Berne, the Dutch Monarch"; the last of whom first convulsed us by asking Tom, in a sepulchral whisper, to "Please wake your friend," pointing to Paddy, who was indeed asleep; and then had a very funny dialogue with the piano pounder, in which they both pretended to get in a towering passion over the question as to whether the singing or the accompaniment was the worse.

The delights of the playbill were now well-nigh exhausted, the next to the last on the list being "Alice Wentworth, America's Most Dashing Soubrette." She appeared to the tune of some gay waltz notes from the long-suffering piano. Alice was a slender girl, with brown hair and large, dark eyes. I doubt she could ever have been "dashing," though pretty she certainly had been. There were also signs that "once she had seen better days," as the old song goes. But now, despite the assistance of paint and padding, it was evident that sickness or dissipation had robbed her of most of the attractions she had once possessed. Her face was too thin for the bright color on her cheeks, her steps were too listless for the generously filled stockings, and she coughed several times before she began her song. It was a jolly little thing, sung in good time and tune, and with those touches which indicate unmistakably the rudiments, at least, of

a musical education. The song was well received, but at the end of the verse she had a dance, which called for considerable exertion, and was very trying for her. She got through the first two verses all right, but when she started the third her strength was gone; she broke down, and gasped for breath. The piano continued for a few notes, then stopped, and there was a dead silence. It was a pitiful sight enough: the poor girl trying to get strength enough to continue, coughing and gasping painfully; but some one in the orchestra back of us hissed, there was a cry from the gallery of "Take her off," and then a chorus of yells and catcalls. It was the same old wolf instinct which makes the pack tear to pieces the wounded straggler, — the wolf instinct in some way transmitted to man.

I was indignant enough, and looked around at the audience after the chap that made the first hiss, but should probably have done nothing had not Tom Furness, who has the biggest heart in the world, made an effort to stem the tide. He jumped on his feet, rising to his full height, and began to applaud with all his might. Of course we all joined in, Paddy's big feet and hands making a prodigious noise; and the better nature of the audience being given a lead, the hisses were drowned by a great storm of applause that fairly shook the old theater.

Poor Alice succeeded in getting enough breath to finish her song, and, dancing no more, gave as an encore "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonny Doon," in a way that reached the hearts of the toughest in the house. It is wonderful how such an audience is affected by the pathetic. An allusion to an "old mother," an "old home," or suffering from sin and wrong will catch them quicker than the most doubtful verse.

The last word of the old Scotch song ended, Alice made her bow amid applause as hearty if not as noisy as when we drowned the hissing, and I hope the poor girl was able to keep her place, or, better still, went back to the old home, among the New Hampshire hills, perhaps, or under the shadow of the Maine pines.

There was now a great bustle on the stage, a rush of "supes," and a clamor of orders. The scenery was pushed back and the drop scenes hoisted out of the way. Padded posts were set in the floor, ropes strung and pulled taut, making a very satisfactory ring, and the chairs placed in the corners. By the demonstration on the stage and the eagerness of the audience, it was evident that we had now come to the great attraction of

the evening. The playbill read "George Johnson, Heavy-Weight Boxer, Will Knock Out Three Opponents in Three Rounds Each, or Forfeit $50 to the Man Who Stays."

Now, although I was fairly well informed concerning the boxing world, I was unable to remember "George Johnson's" name, and wondered why he had not been taken on by some of the well-known men who intruded themselves into the papers so frequently. The playbill said clearly that he had challenged the world, and Tom suggested that Johnson was probably too good for them to take him on, or perhaps he had not a diligent backer who could wield a vigorous pen. Harry, who stripped at one hundred and thirty, declared his willingness to put on the gloves with Mr. Johnson if they would let him stand on a chair. Paddy, to whom the performance had become a dreadful bore, endured only through respect for the high society in which he was traveling, had now become wide awake, and at Harry's remark pricked up his ears and asked with much interest if they gave any one in the audience a chance to put on the gloves. Jim told him that there were probably three "stiffs" already engaged to go through the motions of a knock-out, and Paddy remarked that it was a pity, and subsided for the time.

When everything was arranged, the pails of water, sponges, and towels handy, and the gloves thrown into the middle of the ring, the manager introduced Mr. Richard Foley as the referee of the bouts, ending his remarks with some very florid compliments to Mr. Foley's well-known fairness in such matters. What was our surprise to discover in the gentlemanly referee the identical man we had first stopped on the street to inquire for "Dinny Sullivan, the copper." He wore the same short coat and plaid trousers, but had discarded the tall hat and the cigar, without which he looked lonely. The mouse under his eye had also disappeared, the artist having succeeded in disguising its mournful hue by a skillful application of flesh paint.

After the enthusiasm which greeted his appearance had a little subsided, Mr. Foley raised his hand in a Napoleonic fashion to command silence, stepped to the front of the stage, and hanging on the ropes in an attitude of extreme ease and freedom from restraint, made the usual little speech without which a boxing contest would seem out of joint. He declared the bout to be one of "a friendly nature" for "scientific points

Paddy sigh. In short, when Patrick O'Malley, our "Knight of the Rake and Roller," took his seat at the end of the first round, his smile was gone, and he looked like a man in a trance.

Johnson had hit hard enough to have put most men to sleep, but on Paddy's tough anatomy had made no serious impression, after all. Pat's right eye was in a fair way to close, and his face looked puffy and his neck sore, but he was as strong as ever, and his courage as good, though he probably would have been willing to admit that over the picnic aspect of the occasion there had come a cloud. Harry and Jim got at work at him with sponge and towel the minute he took his seat. A very artistic exhibition they gave, and no doubt Jim's advice which he whispered was very good, but there was nothing before Paddy but a "knock-out" unless the unexpected happened.

Johnson was without a mark, and I question whether he had been hit at all. He took his drink, smiled up at his handlers as they worked the cool sponge over his hot chest and arms, and leaned back on the ropes with an air of extreme contentment.

When the bell rang for the second round, Paddy came up in good condition, but with a somewhat dubious expression on his countenance, and he kept his left a little lower, ready to stop some of the straight punches he had accepted so generously in the first round. He did not swing quite as wildly as before, and although hit harder, the blows did not land quite as often. In the last half-minute, however, Johnson cut loose, and Paddy's broad face and thick neck were visited in a savage manner. The bell barely saved him, for the poor fellow was fairly smothered with blows, and yet he stood up to his punishment without flinching, and fought back as best he could.

Tom had lost patience when he saw Paddy staggering like a bullock under an ax, and though I told him we could do nothing to help, he insisted we should at least be with the rest of the party. So the minute the bell rang for the end of the round, we crowded along the seats, and hurrying through the door, I was just in time to reach Paddy's corner before he started in for the third and last round. Now, of all men on earth Paddy believed in me; Jim and Harry were all right, and doing all possible for him, but when he felt my hand on his arm, and heard my whisper in his ears, his heart, almost gone, came back to him. He turned his swollen face up to me,

speech, of which I could distinguish nothing but the last words, as he gave a comprehensive sweep of his gloved hand, including our whole company, and yelled, "An' ivery wan a winner." He would have spoken longer had not the manager, with rare presence of mind, dropped the curtain in front of him. Johnson had come to himself very quickly with the assistance of his handlers, and now stepped up to Paddy with very honest congratulations, and the contestants shook hands with mutual respect and no ill will.

We were delayed a few minutes by our inability to get the boxing glove off of Paddy's big right hand; the left he had removed himself on receipt of the bill. We finally cut it off him, formed in line of march, and threading our way through the wings, joined the last stragglers of the audience as they filed out. I tried hard to subdue the spirits of my companions, but with little success. Jim and Harry were greatly elated, and Tom (who of all men enjoys winning) was now as bad as the others, and deserting me, left the conservative vote in a very decided minority.

There was certainly nothing lacking in the perfect success of the evening but the fact that "Dinny, the copper," the great object of our search, had evaded us. I voted to give him up and go back to the hotel; the others hesitated, but Tom, who never despairs,—Tom still declared that Dinny would yet appear. Tom is a man who has faith that a ball team will win with the score five to one against in the ninth inning, two out, and a weak hitter at the bat.

Jim and Harry were too much elated by their success with Paddy in the "squared circle" to ask for much else. In fact, they were slightly hilarious. The intoxication of victory, on top of their efforts to "kape the night out," was a bit too much for them. In passing along they tipped over a table by the door, sending a shower of playbills on the floor, and when a stout fellow remonstrated, Jim promptly "crowned" his derby hat with a blow that sent it down to his chin.

In the lobby the big wooden statue of Terpsichore, standing in scant attire, with one foot lifted for the dance, caught Harry's eye. He whispered to Jim and Paddy, and before I could interfere, they had torn her from her fastenings, and "stood the old girl on her head." As the muse was being balanced in this undignified position in the corner, there suddenly arose a cry of "Police! Police!" in high-pitched

and nasal tones from the ticket office. It was Paddy's "ancient enemy" who had discovered us, with his face close to the aperture, secure in the protection of the window. He called lustily, until a huge fist swung through the hole, and landed on the Roman nose with a dull, sickening thud. Silence followed Paddy's skillful blow, but the mischief was done, for there suddenly appeared through the door behind us a knock-kneed bobby, club in hand. Tom called "'Ware the cop!" and by giving the promptest kind of leg bail they just escaped him, bolting out the door, and across the Bowery, the crooked-legged copper close after.

Harry, who was leading, swung down a dimly lighted alley, Jim and Paddy following in order. The policeman, who apparently had little confidence in his ability to catch such nimble-footed gentry, stopped at the corner, and commenced a devil's tattoo with his night club on the pavement as a signal for some compatriot to head off the fugitives. Tom and I, who were close up, dashed by him without a word, resolved to stick to our friends, no matter what the cost. Tom was chuckling with delight, gave me a look over his shoulder, and set a killing pace, with the laudible ambition of running me off my feet, as well as distancing our pursuers. Chasing and being chased is one of the primitive pleasures of man, and I doubt if we ever quite outgrow it. We cut through the darkness, with the cool night air in our faces, sprinting over the slippery cobblestones of the pavement as if in the finals of a "hundred." There was a mad pleasure in it all, and the listening for sounds of pursuit and the looking sharply ahead for threatening danger added a double zest. It reminded me of a night in old Lancashire, when with some schoolmates I had raided a farmer's orchard, and with the spoils under our jackets we had led him a cross-country run of a couple of miles, knowing that a good thrashing was close behind as the punishment for a stumble or a temporary shortness of breath.

We were gaining on the three dark forms ahead, for we could see them more and more plainly as they bobbed against the lights at the end of the street. Occasionally some one would yell at us from a window or doorway, but the pounding of the knock-kneed bobby was growing more and more faint, and we heard no footsteps at all behind us. We had almost reached Paddy, whose boxing efforts had told on his endur-

ance, and I was just about to call to Jim and Harry, when suddenly there emerged from the darkness a herculean figure in brass buttons.

It floated into the middle of the alley, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, silent, huge, portentous. A long arm reached for Harry as he dodged to one side of the alley, and gathered the little fellow in, while Jim slid by on the other side. Paddy sprang to Harry's assistance, and got a blow with the flat of the hand that sent him in a heap on the pavement. Jim was about to mix in the fracas, but Tom and I, who knew better than to assail the majesty of the law, caught and held him. For a moment neither of us spoke, watching Harry's futile struggles. He was being held firmly, but gently, like a fractious child, and a voice of a richness that cast Paddy's brogue quite in the shade said soothingly, "Arrah there, be aisy. It's hurtin' yesel' ye are. Be aisy, or I'll pull ye in."

I was glad to hear the figure speak, for the silence was quite uncanny. Tom advanced in that conciliatory way of his when he feels that he has a delicate task before him, and was about to make his little appeal, with one hand on the roll of bills in his pocket, when Paddy, who had sat up at the sound of the voice, and was looking fixedly at Harry's captor, gave a howl of mingled surprise and joy, and exclaimed, "Begorry, Dinny, ye Connemara divil, let the lad go, or I'll break yer face."

At these words Harry stopped his struggles and Jim abandoned his efforts to break away from me. Tom stood with his mouth wide open, uncertain what to do, and I waited as if I were watching a play and the dramatic climax was about to be sprung on me.

Paddy rose slowly and unsteadily to his feet; and the big policeman took him by the collar with his unoccupied hand, and led him to the light of a little window, where he studied his face a moment in silence. Gradually over the big copper's face there spread a grin of recognition, his brown mustache drawing up at the corners, despite his efforts to look severe.

"Sure, 'tis yesilf, Patrick, ye blaguard," he said at last, shaking his head; "but frind or no frind, divil a wan o' me cares, if wrong ye've done."

"It's only a bit av a lark, an' no harm at all, at all," answered Paddy; and then he told the story of the evening, the search, the boxing contest, and the mischief in the lobby, making as little as possible of the latter, and expatiating at length

on our efforts to find "Dinny, the copper," with our extreme pleasure at final success. He ended by introducing us all with much pride and satisfaction.

Dinny listened at first with suspicion, afterward with a flash in his blue eyes as Paddy described his victory over Johnson, and finally with a slow smile, expanding into a grin, as the adventure in the lobby was described.

When Paddy finished, the "arm-of-the-law" turned without a word, letting Harry and Paddy go free again, tapped on the little window through whose brown curtain enough light had streamed to make recognition possible, and waited in silence until there came a sound of moving bolts. He then pushed a door open, led us through a dark entry, and into a little back room, where there was a long table, plenty of chairs, and a kettle singing on the stove in the corner. I have a suspicion that it was from this very same snug retreat that Dinny emerged when the sound of the rattling night club disturbed him. I learned that the little room was the sanctum sanctorum of the widow Rafferty, whose barroom in front was too public to suit the refined taste of Mr. Dennis Sullivan, and was also perhaps more exposed to the gaze of an inquisitive inspector.

Dinny went to a corner cupboard, with the air of a man who knew the way, took from it a brown jug, and placed it carefully on the table with a half dozen tumblers. He pointed to the chairs with a wave of his hand, and when we were seated he broke the silence with, "Gintlemen, 'tis proud I am to meet ye all, though in bad company ye come" (the last with a smile at Paddy). "I've a little something here" (looking fondly at the jug) "will kape the night out; 'tis the rale old stuff, such as we used to drink in old Connemara. 'Tis aisy I've been with yes, but, faith, I swear to pull in ivery mother's son that will not drink with me."

We all filled our glasses, though Tom called us to witness that he drank under protest, and only through fear of arrest. Just how long we lingered in the widow Rafferty's back room I cannot tell, but we discovered Dinny to be the very prince of coppers, able to tell a good story and sing a better song. He was a broth of a boy, and would have gladdened the eyes of the manager of a football team. He stood six feet three in his stockings, and weighed two hundred and fifty pounds, all good stuff, and as hard as nails. His uniform was fresh, and fitted him like a glove, while every button was bright as a West

Point cadet's. When we came to part with him it was with mutual expressions of good will, which were increased when we discovered he had sent for a carriage, and the same awaited us in the dark alley. If he has his dues he is chief of police by this time.

We were a bit quiet on the way home, a little weary, and very contented and happy. There was a hint of the morning in the east as we alighted at the hotel, and the lobby was silent and deserted.

We were much pleased to find that the elevator was still running, and we climbed aboard, at peace with all the world, and just ready for bed. As Tom said, a five minutes earlier or later would have spoiled it. When we reached the third floor, Paddy insisted that we must go with him to the fifth, so we kept on, and Harry unlocked the door and Jim lit the gas. When we bade him "good night" and the elevator began to drop, he stood in his doorway, a smile of perfect bliss shining on his honest face. He waved his big hand at us with a gesture that was half farewell, half a benediction, and murmured huskily, "An' ivery wan a winner."



THE DEATHBED.

By THOMAS HOOD.

We watched her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied —
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad
And chilled with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed — she had
Another morn than ours.



GADSHILL, HOME OF CHARLES DICKENS

THE BOY AT MUGBY.

By CHARLES DICKENS

[CHARLES DICKENS, one of the greatest novelists and humorists of the world, was born February 7, 1812, at Portsea, Eng. His father being unprosperous, he had no regular education and much hardship, at fourteen became an attorney's clerk, and at seventeen a reporter His first short story appeared in December, 1833, the collected "Sketches by Boz" in 1836, which also saw the first number of "The Pickwick Papers," finished in November, 1837 There followed "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," "Master Humphrey's Clock" (finally dissolved into the "Old Curiosity Shop" and "Barnaby Rudge"), the "American Notes," "Martin Chuzzlewit," the "Christmas Carol" (other Christmas stories followed later), "Notes from Italy," "Dombey and Son," "David Copperfield," "Bleak House," "Hard Times," "Little Dorrit," "Great Expectations," "A Tale of Two Cities," "Our Mutual Friend," and the unfinished "Edwin Drood" Several of these, and his "Uncommercial Traveller" papers, appeared in *All the Year Round*, which he edited. He died June 9, 1870.]

I AM the boy at Mugby. That's about what I am.

You don't know what I mean? What a pity! But I think you do. I think you must. Look here. I am the boy at what is called the refreshment room at Mugby Junction, and what's proudest boast is that I never yet refreshed a mortal being.

Up in a corner of the down refreshment room at Mugby Junction, in the height of twenty-seven cross draughts (I've often counted 'em while they brush the first-class hair twenty-seven ways), behind the bottles, among the glasses, bounded on the nor'west by the beer, stood pretty far to the right of a metallic object that's at times the tea urn and at times the soup tureen, according to the nature of the last twang imparted to its contents, which are the same groundwork, fended off from the traveler by a barrier of stale sponge cakes erected atop of the counter, and lastly exposed sideways to the glare of our missis' eye — you ask a boy so situwated, next time you stop in a hurry at Mugby, for anything to drink; you take particular notice that he'll try to seem not to hear you, that he'll appear in a absent manner to survey the line through a transparent medium composed of your head and body, and that he won't serve you as long as you can possibly bear it. That's me.

What a lark it is! We are the model establishment, we are, at Mugby. Other refreshment rooms send their imperfect

young ladies up to be finished off by our missis. For some of the young ladies, when they're new to the business, come into it mild! Ah! Our missis, she soon takes that out of 'em. Why, I originally come into the business meek myself. But our missis, she soon took that out of me.

What a delightful lark it is! I look upon us refreshmenters as ockipying the only proudly independent footing on the line. There's Papers, for instance — my honorable friend, if he will allow me to call him so — him as belongs to Smith's bookstall. Why, he no more dares to be up to our refreshmenting games than he dares to jump atop of a locomotive with her steam at full pressure, and cut away upon her alone, driving himself, at limited mail speed. Papers, he'd get his head punched at every compartment, first, second, and third, the whole length of the train, if he was to venture to imitate my demeanor. It's the same with the porters, the same with the guards, the same with the ticket clerks, the same the whole way up to the secretary, traffic manager, or very chairman. There ain't a one among 'em on the nobly independent footing we are. Did you ever catch one of them, when you wanted anything of him, making a system of surveying the line through a transparent medium of your head and body? I should hope not.

You should see our bandolining room at Mugby Junction. It's led to by the door behind the counter, which you'll notice usually stands ajar, and it's the room where our missis and our young ladies bandolines their hair. You should see 'em at it, betwixt trains, bandolining away, as if they was anointing themselves for the combat. When you're telegraphed you should see their noses all a going up with scorn, as if it was a part of the working of the same Cooke and Wheatstone electrical machinery. You should hear our missis give the word. "Here comes the beast to be fed!" and then you should see 'em indignantly skipping across the line, from the up to the down, or wicer warsar, and begin to pitch the stale pastry into the plates, and chuck the sawdust sandwiches under the glass covers, and get out the — ha! ha! ha! — the sherry — oh, my eye! my eye! — for your refreshment.

It's only in the isle of the brave and land of the free (by which, of course, I mean to say Britannia) that refreshmenting is so effective, so 'olesome, so constitutional a check upon the public. There was a foreigner, which having politely, with his hat off, beseeched our young ladies and our missis for "a leetel

gloss hoff prandee," and having had the line surveyed through him by all, and no other acknowledgment, was a proceeding at last to help himself, as seems to be the custom in his own country, when our missis, with her hair almost a coming unbandolined with rage, and her eyes omitting sparks, flew at him, cotched the decanter out of his hand, and said, "Put it down! I won't allow that!" The foreigner turned pale, stepped back with his arms stretched out in front of him, his hands clasped, and his shoulders riz, and exclaimed: "Ah! Is it possible, this! That these disdaineous females and this ferocious old woman are placed here by the administration, not only to empoison the voyagers, but to affront them! Great Heaven! How arrives it? The English people. Or is he then a slave? Or idiot?" Another time, a merry, wide-awake American gent had tried the sawdust and spit it out, and had tried the sherry and spit that out, and had tried in vain to sustain exhausted natur upon butter-scotch, and had been rather extra bandolined and line-surveyed through, when as the bell was ringing and he paid our missis, he says, very loud and good-tempered: "I tell yew what 'tis, marm. I la'af. Theer! I la'af. I dew. I oughter ha' seen most things, for I hail from the onlimited side of the Atlantic Ocean, and I haive traveled right slick over the limited, head on through Jeerusalemm and the East and likewise France and Italy, Europe, Old World, and am now upon the track to the chief Europian village, but such an institution as yew and yewer young ladies and yewer fixin's solid and liquid, afore the glorious tarnal I never did see yet! And if I hain't found the eighth wonder of monarchical creation in finding yew and yewer young ladies and yewer fixin's solid and liquid, all as aforesaid, established in a country where the people air not absolute loonaticks, I am extra double darned with a nip and frizzle to the innermostest grit! Wheerfur—theer!—I la'af! I dew, marm. I la'af!" And so he went, stamping and shaking his sides, along the platform all the way to his own compartment.

I think it was her standing up agin the foreigner as giv' our missis the idea of going over to France, and droring a comparison betwixt refreshmenting as followed among the frog eaters and refreshmenting as triumphant in the isle of the brave and land of the free (by which, of course, I mean to say agin Britannia). Our young ladies, Miss Whiff, Miss Piff, and Mrs. Sniff, was unanimous opposed to her going: for, as

they says to our missis one and all, it is well beknown to the hends of the herth as no other nation except Britain has a idea of anything, but above all of business. Why then should you tire yourself to prove what is already proved? Our missis, however (being a teaser at all pints), stood out grim obstinate, and got a return pass by Southeastern Tidal, to go right through, if such should be her dispositions, to Marseilles.

Sniff is husband to Mrs. Sniff, and is a regular insignificant cove. He looks arter the sawdust department in a back room, and is sometimes, when we are very hard put to it, let behind the counter with a corkscrew; but never when it can be helped, his demeanor toward the public being disgusting servile. How Mrs. Sniff ever come so far to lower herself as to marry him, I don't know; but I suppose he does, and I should think he wished he didn't, for he leads a awful life. Mrs. Sniff couldn't be much harder with him if he was public. Similarly, Miss Whiff and Miss Piff, taking the tone of Mrs. Sniff, they shoulder Sniff about when he is let in with a corkscrew, and they whisk things out of his hands when in his servility he is a going to let the public have 'em, and they snap him up when in the crawling baseness of his spirit he is a going to answer a public question, and they dror more tears into his eyes than ever the mustard does which he all day long lays on to the sawdust. (But it ain't strong.) Once, when Sniff had the repulsiveness to reach across to get the milk pot to hand over for a baby, I see our missis in her rage catch him by both his shoulders, and spin him out into the bandolining room.

But Mrs. Sniff — how different! She's the one! She's the one as you'll notice to be always looking another way from you when you look at her. She's the one with the small waist buckled in tight in front, and with the lace cuffs at her wrists, which she puts on the edge of the counter before her, and stands a smoothing while the public foams. This smoothing the cuffs and looking another way while the public foams is the last accomplishment taught to the young ladies as come to Mugby to be finished by our missis; and it's always taught by Mrs. Sniff.

When our missis went away upon her journey, Mrs. Sniff was left in charge. She did hold the public in check most beautiful! In all my time, I never see half so many cups of tea given without milk to people as wanted it with, nor half so many cups of tea with milk given to people as wanted it with-

out. When foaming ensued, Mrs. Sniff would say: "Then you'd better settle it among yourselves, and change with one another." It was a most highly delicious lark. I enjoyed the refreshmenting business more than ever, and so glad I had took to it when young.

Our missis returned. It got circulated among the young ladies, and it as it might be penetrated to me through the crevices of the bandolining room, that she had orrors to reveal, if revelations so contemptible could be dignified with the name. Agitation become weakened. Excitement was up in the stirrups. Expectation stood a-tiptoe. At length it was put forth that on our slackest evening in the week, and at our slackest time of that evening betwixt trains, our missis would give her views of foreign refreshmenting in the bandolining room.

It was arranged tasteful for the purpose. The bandolining table and glass was hid in a corner, a armchair was elevated on a packing case for our missis' ockipation, a table and a tumbler of water (no sherry in it, thankee) was placed beside it. Two of the pupils, the season being autumn and hollyhocks and dahlias being in, ornamented the wall with three devices in those flowers. On one might be read, "May Albion Never Learn;" on another, "Keep the Public Down;" on another, "Our Refreshmenting Charter." The whole had a beautiful appearance, with which the beauty of the sentiments corresponded.

On our missis' brow was wrote severity as she ascended the fatal platform. (Not that that was anything new.) Miss Whiff and Miss Piff sat at her feet. Three chairs from the waiting room might have been perceived by a average eye in front of her, on which the pupils was accommodated. Behind them, a very close observer might have discerned a boy. Myself.

"Where," said our missis, glancing gloomily around, "is Sniff?"

"I thought it better," answered Mrs. Sniff, "that he should not be let come in. He is such an ass."

"No doubt," assented our missis. "But for that reason is it not desirable to improve his mind?"

"Oh, nothing will ever improve him," said Mrs. Sniff.

"However," pursued our missis, "call him in, Ezekiel."

I called him in. The appearance of the low-minded cove was hailed with disapprobation from all sides, on account of

his having brought his corkscrew with him. He pleaded "the force of habit."

"The force!" said Mrs. Sniff. "Don't let us have you talking about force, for gracious' sake. There! Do stand still where you are, with your back against the wall."

He is a smiling piece of vacancy, and he smiled in the mean way in which he will even smile at the public if he gets a chance (language can say no meaner of him), and he stood upright near the door with the back of his head agin' the wall, as if he was waiting for somebody to come and measure his height for the army.

"I should not enter, ladies," said our missis, "on the revolting disclosures I am about to make, if it was not in the hopes that they will cause you to be yet more implacable in the exercise of the power you wield in a constitutional country, and yet more devoted to the constitutional motto which I see before me"—it was behind her, but the words sounded better so—"'May Albion Never Learn!'"

Here the pupils as had made the motto admired it, and cried, "Hear! Hear! Hear!" Sniff, showing an inclination to join in chorus, got himself frowned down by every brow.

"The baseness of the French," pursued our missis, "as displayed in the fawning nature of their refreshmenting, equals, if not surpasses, anythink as we ever heard of the baseness of the celebrated Bonaparte."

Miss Whiff, Miss Piff, and me, we drored a heavy breath, equal to saying, "We thought as much!" Miss Whiff and Miss Piff seeming to object to my droring mine along with theirs, I drored another to aggravate 'em.

"Shall I be believed," says our missis, with flashing eyes, "when I tell you that no sooner had I set my foot upon that treacherous shore——"

Here Sniff, either bursting out mad, or thinking aloud, says, in a low voice: "Feet. Plural, you know."

The cowering that come upon him when he was spurned by all eyes, added to his being beneath contempt, was sufficient punishment for a cove so groveling. In the midst of a silence rendered more impressive by the turned-up female noses with which it was pervaded, our missis went on:—

"Shall I be believed when I tell you that no sooner had I landed," this word with a killing look at Sniff, "on that treacherous shore than I was ushered into a refreshment room where

there were — I do not exaggerate — actually eatable things to eat?"

A groan burst from the ladies. I not only did myself the honor of jining, but also of lengthening it out.

"Where there were," our missis added, "not only eatable things to eat, but also drinkable things to drink!"

A murmur, swelling almost into a scream, ariz. Miss Piff trembling with indignation, called out, "Name!"

"I will name," said our missis. "There was roast fowls, hot and cold; there was smoking roast veal surrounded with browned potatoes; there was hot soup with (again I ask shall I be credited?) nothing bitter in it, and no flour to choke off the consumer; there was a variety of cold dishes set off with jelly; there was salad; there was — mark me! — fresh pastry, and that of a light construction; there was a luscious show of fruit; there was bottles and decanters of sound small wine, of every size, and adapted to every pocket; the same odious statement will apply to brandy; and these were set out upon the counter so that all could help themselves."

Our missis' lips so quivered that Mrs. Sniff, though scarcely less convulsed than she were, got up and held the tumbler to them.

"This," proceeds our missis, "was my first unconstitutional experience. Well would it have been if it had been my last and worst. But no. As I proceeded further into that enslaved and ignorant land, its aspect became more hideous. I need not explain to this assembly the ingredients and formation of the British refreshment sangwich?"

Universal laughter — except from Sniff, who, as sangwich cutter, shook his head in a state of the utmost dejection as he stood with it agin' the wall.

"Well!" said our missis, with dilated nostrils. "Take a fresh, crisp, long, crusty penny loaf made of the whitest and best flour. Cut it longwise through the middle. Insert a fair and nicely fitting slice of ham. Tie a smart piece of ribbon round the middle of the whole to bind it together. Add at one end a neat wrapper of clean white paper by which to hold it. And the universal French refreshment sangwich busts on your disgusted vision."

A cry of "Shame!" from all — except Sniff, who rubbed his stomach with a soothing hand.

"I need not," said our missis, "explain to this assembly

the usual formation and fitting of the British refreshment room?"

No, no, and laughter. Sniff agin shaking his head in low spirits agin' the wall.

"Well," said our missis, "what would you say to a general decoration of everythink, to hangings (sometimes elegant), to easy velvet furniture, to abundance of little tables, to abundance of little seats, to brisk bright waiters, to great convenience, to a pervading cleanliness and tastefulness positively addressing the public, and making the beast thinking itself worth the pains?"

Contemptuous fury on the part of all the ladies. Mrs. Sniff looking as if she wanted somebody to hold her, and everybody else looking as if they'd rather not.

"Three times," said our missis, working herself into a truly terrimenjious state — "three times did I see these shameful things, only between the coast and Paris, and not counting either at Hazebroucke, at Arras, at Amiens. But worse remains. Tell me what would you call a person who should propose in England that there should be kept, say at our own model Mugby Junction, pretty baskets, each holding an assorted cold lunch and dessert for one, each at a certain fixed price, and each within a passenger's power to take away, to empty in the carriage at perfect leisure, and to return at another station fifty or a hundred miles further on?"

There was disagreement what such a person should be called. Whether revolutionist, atheist, Bright (I said him), or un-English. Miss Piff screeched her shrill opinion last in the words: "A malignant maniac!"

"I adopt," says our missis, "the brand set upon such a person by the righteous indignation of my friend Miss Piff. A malignant maniac. Know, then, that that malignant maniac has sprung from the congenial soil of France, and that his malignant madness was in unchecked action on this same part of my journey."

I noticed that Sniff was a rubbing his hands, and that Mrs. Sniff had got her eye upon him. But I did not take more particular notice, owing to the excited state in which the young ladies was, and to feeling myself called upon to keep it up with a howl.

"On my experience south of Paris," said our missis, in a deep tone, "I will not expatiate. Too loathsome were the task! But fancy this. Fancy a guard coming round, with

the train at full speed, to inquire how many for dinner. Fancy his telegraphing forward the numbers of diners. Fancy every one expected, and the table elegantly laid for the complete party. Fancy a charming dinner, in a charming room, and the head cook, concerned for the honor of every dish, superintending in his clean white jacket and cap. Fancy the beast traveling six hundred miles on end, very fast and with great punctuality, yet being taught to expect all this to be done for it!"

A spirited chorus of "The beast!"

I noticed that Sniff was agin a rubbing his stomach with a soothing hand, and that he had drored up one leg. But agin I didn't take particular notice, looking on myself as called upon to stimulate public feeling. It being a lark besides.

"Putting everything together," said our missis, "French refreshmenting comes to this, and oh, it comes to a nice total! First: eatable things to eat and drinkable things to drink."

A groan from the young ladies, kep' up by me.

"Second: convenience, and even elegance."

Another groan from the young ladies, kep' up by me.

"Third: moderate charges."

This time a groan from me, kep' up by the young ladies.

"Fourth: and here," says our missis, "I claim your angriest sympathy—attention, common civility, nay, even politeness!"

Me and the young ladies regularly raging mad all together.

"And I cannot in conclusion," says our missis, with her spitefulest sneer, "give you a completer pictur of that despicable nation (after what I have related) than assuring you that they wouldn't bear our constitutional ways and noble independence at Mugby Junction for a single month, and that they would turn us to the right-about and put another system in our places as soon as look at us; perhaps sooner, for I do not believe they have the good taste to care to look at us twice."

The swelling tumult was arrested in its rise. Sniff, bore away by his servile disposition, had drored up his leg with a higher and a higher relish, and was now discovered to be waving his corkscrew over his head. It was at this moment that Mrs. Sniff, who had kep' her eye upon him like the fabled obelisk, descended on her victim. Our missis followed them both out, and cries was heard in the sawdust department.

You come into the down refreshment room at the Junction making believe you don't know me, and I'll pint you out with

my right thumb over my shoulder which is our missis, and which is Miss Whiff, and which is Miss Piff, and which is Mrs. Sniff. But you won't get a chance to see Sniff, because he disappeared that night. Whether he perished, tore to pieces, I cannot say; but his corkscrew alone remains to bear witness to the servility of his disposition.



THE TRIAL OF RALPH RAY.[1]

By HALL CAINE.

(From "The Shadow of a Crime.")

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I.

Long before the hour appointed for the resumption of the trial of Ralph Ray, a great crowd filled the market place at Carlisle, and lined the steps of the old townhall, to await the opening of the doors. As the clock in the cupola was striking ten, three men inside the building walked along the corridor to unbar the public entrance.

"I half regret it," said one; "you have forced me into it. I should never have touched it but for you."

"Tut, man," whispered another, "you saw how it was going. With yon man on the bench and yon other crafty waistrel at the bar, the chance was well-nigh gone. What hope was there of a conviction?"

"None, none; never make any more botherment about it, Master Lawson," said the third.

"The little tailor is safe. He can do no harm as a witness."

"I'm none so sure of that," rejoined the first speaker.

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THOMAS HENRY HALL CAINE

The door was thrown open, and the three men stepped aside to allow the crush to pass them. One of the first to enter was Mrs. Garth. The uncanny old crone cast a quick glance about her as she came in with the rest, hooded close against the cold. Her eyes fell on one of the three men who stood apart. For a moment she fixed her gaze steadfastly upon him, and then the press from behind swept her forward. But in that moment she had exchanged a swift and unmistakable glance of recognition. The man's face twitched slightly. He looked relieved when the woman passed on.

Dense as had been the throng that filled the court on the earlier hearing, the throng was now even yet more dense. The benches usually provided for the public had been removed, and spectators stood on every inch of the floor. Some crept up to the windows, and climbed on to the window boards. One or two daring souls clambered over the shoulders of their fellows to the principals of the roof, and sat perched across them. The old courthouse was paved and walled with people.

From the entrance at the western end the occupants of the seats before the table filed in one by one. The first to come was the sheriff, Wilfrey Lawson. With papers in hand he stationed himself immediately under the jurors' box and facing the bar. Then came the clerk of the court, who was making an ostentatious display of familiarity with counsel for the king, who walked half a pace behind him.

The judges took their seats. As they entered, the gentleman of the rubicund complexion was chatting in a facetious vein with his brother judge, who, however, relaxed but little of the settled austerity of his countenance under the fire of many jests.

Silence was commanded, and Ralph Ray was ordered to the bar. He had scarcely taken his place there when the name of Simeon Stagg was also called. For an instant Ralph looked amazed. The sheriff observed his astonishment and smiled. The next moment Sim was by his side. His face was haggard; his long gray and black hair hung over his temples. He was led in. He clutched feverishly at the rail in front. He had not yet lifted his eyes. After a moment he raised them, and met the eyes of Ralph turned toward him. Then he shuffled and sidled up to Ralph's elbow. The people stretched their necks to see the unexpected prisoner.

After many preliminary formalities, it was announced that

the Grand Jury had found a true bill for murder against the two prisoners.

The indictment was read. It charged Ralph Ray and Simeon Stagg with having murdered with malice aforethought James Wilson, agent to the king's counsel.

The prisoners were told to plead. Ralph answered promptly and in a clear tone, "Not guilty." Sim hesitated, looked confused, stammered, lifted his eyes as if inquiringly to Ralph's face, then muttered indistinctly, "Not guilty."

The judges exchanged glances. The clerk with a sneer on his lip mumbled something to counsel. The spectators turned with a slight bustle among themselves. Their pleas had gone against the prisoners—at least against Ralph.

When the men at the bar were asked how they would be tried, Ralph turned to the bench and said he had been kept close prisoner for seven days, none having access to him. Was he to be called to trial, not knowing the charge against him until he was ordered to the bar?

No attention was paid to his complaint, and the jury was impaneled. Then counsel rose, and with the customary circumlocution opened the case against the prisoners. In the first place, he undertook to indicate the motive and occasion of the horrid, vile, and barbarous crime which had been committed, and which, he declared, scarce anything in the annals of justice could parallel; then he would set forth the circumstances under which the act was perpetrated; and, finally, he proposed to show what grounds existed for inferring that the prisoners were guilty thereof.

He told the court that the deceased James Wilson, as became him according to the duty of his secret office, had been a very zealous person. In his legal capacity he had sought and obtained a warrant for the arrest of the prisoner Ray. That warrant had never been served. Why? The dead body of Wilson had been found at daybreak in a lonely road not far from the homes of both prisoners. The warrant was not on the body. It had been missing to that day. His contention would be that the prisoners had obtained knowledge of the warrant; that they had waylaid the deceased agent in a place and at a time most convenient for the execution of their murderous design. With the cunning of clever criminals, they had faced the subsequent coroner's inquiry. One of them, being the less artful, had naturally come under suspicion.

The other, a cunning and dangerous man, had even taken an active share in defending his confederate. But being pursued by a guilty conscience, they dared not stay at the scene of their crime, and both had fled from their homes. All this would be justified by strong and undeniable circumstances.

Counsel resumed his seat amid the heavy breathings and inaudible mutterings of the throng behind him. He was proceeding to call his witnesses, when Ralph asked to be heard.

"Is it the fact that I surrendered of my own free will and choice?"

"It is."

"Is it assumed that I was prompted to that step also by a guilty conscience?"

Counsel realized that he was placed on the horns of a dilemma. Ignoring Ralph, he said:—

"My lords, the younger prisoner *did* surrender. He surrendered to a warrant charging him with conspiring to subvert the king's authority. He threw himself on the mercy of his sovereign, and claimed the benefit of the pardon. And why? To save himself from indictment on the capital charge. At the price, peradventure, of a fine or a year's imprisonment to save himself from the gallows. Thus he tried to hoodwink the law; but, my lords"—and counsel lifted himself to his utmost height—"the law is not to be hoodwinked."

"God forefend else," echoed Justice Millet, shifting his seat and nodding his head with portentous gravity.

"I was loath to interrupt you," said Justice Hide, speaking calmly and for the first time, "or I should have pointed out wherein your statement did not correspond with the facts of the prisoner Ray's conduct as I know it. Let us, without delay, hear the witnesses."

The first witness called was a woman, thinly and poorly clad, who came to the box with tears in her eyes, and gave the name of Margaret Rushton. Ralph recognized her as the young person who had occasioned a momentary disturbance near the door toward the close of the previous trial. Sim recognized her also, but his recollection dated further back.

She described herself as the wife of a man who had been outlawed, and whose estates had been sequestered. She had been living the life of a vagrant woman.

"Was your husband named John Rushton?" asked Ralph.

"Yes," she replied meekly, and all but inaudibly.

"John Rushton, of Aberleigh?"

"The same."

"Did you ever hear him speak of an old comrade — Ralph Ray?"

"Yes, yes," answered the witness, lifting her hands to her face and sobbing aloud.

"The prisoner wastes the time of the court. Let us proceed," said one of the judges.

Ralph saw the situation at a glance. The woman's evidence — whatever it might be — was to be forced from her.

"Have you seen these prisoners before?"

"Yes, one of them."

"Perhaps both?"

"Yes, perhaps both."

"Pray tell my lords and the jury what you know concerning them."

The woman tried to speak, and stopped, tried again and stopped.

Counsel coming to her relief, said: —

"It was in Wythburn you saw them — when was that?"

"I passed through it with my two children at Martinmas," the witness began, falteringly.

"Tell my lords and the jury what happened then."

"I had passed by the village, and had come to a cottage that stood at the angle of two roads. The morning was cold, and my poor babies were crying. Then it came on to rain. So I knocked at the cottage, and an old man opened the door."

"Do you see the old man in this court?"

"Yes — there," pointing to where Sim stood in the dock with downcast eyes.

There was a pause.

"Come, good woman, let my lords and the jury hear what further you know of this matter. You went into the cottage?"

"He said I might warm the children at the fire; their little limbs were cold as stone."

"Well, well?"

"He seemed half crazed, I thought; but he was very kind to me and my little ones. He gave them some warm milk, and said we might stay till the weather cleared. It did not clear all day. Towards nightfall the old man's daughter came home. She was a dear fine girl, God bless her!"

The silence of the court was only disturbed by a stifled groan from the bar, where Sim still stood with downcast eyes. Ralph gazed through a blinding mist at the rafters overhead.

"She nursed the little ones, and gave them oaten cake and barley bread. The good people were poor themselves; I could see they were. It rained heavier than ever; so the young woman made a bed for us in a little room, and we slept in the cottage until morning."

"Was anything said concerning the room you slept in?"

"They said it was their lodger's room; but he was away, and would not return until the night following."

"Next day you took the road toward the north?"

"Yes, toward Carlisle. They told me that if my husband were ever taken he would be brought to Carlisle. That was why I wished to get here. But I had scarce walked a mile —I had a baby at the breast and a little boy who could just toddle beside me — I had scarce walked a mile, before the boy became ill, and could not walk. I first thought to go back to the cottage, but I was too weak to carry both children. So I sat with my little ones by the roadside."

The witness paused again. Ralph was listening with intense eagerness. He was leaning over the rail before him to catch every syllable. When the woman had regained some composure, he said quietly: —

"There is a bridge thereabouts that spans a river. Which side of the bridge were you then?"

"The Carlisle side — that is to say, the north."

The voice of counsel interrupted a further inquiry.

"Pray tell my lords and the jury what else you know, good woman."

"We should have perished with cold where we sat, but looking up I saw that there was a barn in a field close by. It was open to the front. But it seemed to be sheltered on three sides, and had some hay in it. So I made my way to it through a gate, and carried the children."

"What happened while you were there? — quick, woman, let us get to the wicked fact itself."

"We stayed there all day, and when the night came on I covered the little ones in the hay, and they cried themselves to sleep."

The tears were standing in the woman's eyes. The eyes of others were wet.

"Yes, yes, but what *occurred*," said counsel, to whom the weeping of outcast babes was obviously less than an occurrence.

"I could not sleep," said the woman, hoarsely; and lifting her voice to a defiant pitch, she said, "Would that the dear God had let me sleep that night of all nights of my life!"

"Come, good woman," said counsel, more soothingly, "what next?"

"I listened to the footsteps that went by on the road, and so the weary hours trailed on. At last they had ceased to come and go. It was then that I heard a horse's canter far away to the north."

The witness was speaking in a voice so low as to be scarcely audible to the people who stood on tiptoe and held their breath to hear.

"My little boy cried in his sleep. Then all was quiet again."

Sim shuddered perceptibly. He felt his flesh creep.

"The thought came to me that perhaps the man on the horse could give me something to do the boy good. If he came from a distance, he would surely carry brandy. So I labored out of the barn, and trudged through the grass to the hedge. Then I heard footsteps on the road. They were coming toward me."

"Was it dark?"

"Yes, but not very dark. I could see the hedge across the way. The man on foot and the man on the horse came together near where I stood."

"How near — twenty paces?"

"Less. I was about to call, when I heard the man on foot speak to the other, who was riding past him."

"You saw both men clearly?"

"No," replied the woman, firmly; "not clearly. I saw the one on the road. He was a little man, and he limped in his walk."

In the stillness of the court Ralph could almost hear the woman breathe.

"They were quarreling, the two men — you heard what they said?" said counsel, breaking silence.

"It's not true," cried the witness, in a hurried manner, "*I* heard nothing."

'This is no suborned witness, my lords," said counsel, in a cold voice, and with a freezing smile. "Well, woman?"

'The tall man leaped off his horse, and there was a struggle.



HALL CAINE IN HIS STUDY

The little man was swearing. There was a heavy fall, and all was quiet once more."

As she spoke, the woman recoiled to the back of the box, and covered her face in her hands.

"What manner of man was the taller one?"

"He had a strong face with big features and large eyes. I saw him indistinctly."

"Do you see him now?"

"I cannot swear; but—but I think I do."

"Is the prisoner who stands to the left the man you saw that night?"

"The voice is the same, the face is similar, and he wears the same habit—a long, dark coat lined with light flannel."

"Is that all you know of the matter?"

"I knew that a crime had been committed in my sight. I felt that a dead body lay close beside me. I was about to turn away, when I heard a third man come up and speak to the man on the horse."

"You knew the voice?"

"It was the cottager who had given us shelter. I ran back to the barn, snatched up my two children in their sleep, and fled away across the fields—I knew not where."

Justice Hide asked the witness why she had not spoken of this before—three months had elapsed since then.

She replied that she had meant to do so, but it came into her mind that perhaps the cottager was somehow concerned in the crime, and she remembered how good he and his daughter had been to her.

"How had she come to make the disclosures now?"

The witness explained that when she crushed her way into the court a week ago it was with the idea that the prisoner might be her husband. He was not her husband, but when she saw his face she remembered that she had seen him before. A man in the body of the court had followed her out and asked her questions.

"Who was the man?" asked the judge, turning to the sheriff.

The gentleman addressed pointed to a man near at hand, who rose at this reference, with a smile of mingled pride and cunning as though he felt honored by this public disclosure of his astuteness. He was a small man with a wrinkled face, and a sinister cast in one of his eyes, which lay deep under shaggy brows. We have met him before.

he judge looked steadily at him as he rose in his place. a minute or two he turned again to look at him. Then ade some note on a paper in his hand.

he witness looked jaded and worn with the excitement. ng her examination Sim had never for an instant upraised yes from the ground. The eagerness with which Ralph watched her was written in every muscle of his face. liberty was given him to question her, he asked in a soft ender voice if she knew what time of the night it might hen she had seen what she had described.

Between nine and ten o'clock as near as she could say— ps fully ten."

Was she sure which side of the bridge she was on—north uth?"

Sure—it was north of the bridge."

alph asked if the records of the coroner's inquiry were at . They were not. Could he have them examined? It eedless. But why?

Because," said Ralph, "it was sworn before the coroner he body was found to the south of the bridge—fifty yards e south of it." The point was treated with contempt and derisive laughter. When Ralph pressed it, there was ning and hissing in the court.

We must not expect that we can have exact and positive ," said Justice Millet; "we would come as near as we o circumstances by which a fact of this dark nature can be d. It is easy for a witness to be mistaken on such a point."

he young woman, Margaret Rushton, was being dismissed.

One word," said Justice Hide. "You say you have heard husband speak of the prisoner Ray—how has he spoken m?"

How?—as the bravest gentleman in all England!" said voman, eagerly.

im lifted his head and clutched the rail. "God—it's true, rue," he cried hysterically, in a voice that ran through the .

My lords," said counsel, "you have heard the truth wrung a reluctant witness, but you have not heard all the circum- es of this horrid fact. The next witness will prove the ve of the crime."

burly Cumbrian came into the box, and gave the name of nas Scroope. He was an agent to the king's counsel.

Ralph glanced at him. He was the man who insulted the girl in Lancaster.

He said he remembered the defendant Ray as a captain in the trained bands of the late Parliament. Ray was always proud and arrogant. He had supplanted the captain whose captaincy he afterward held.

"When was that?"

"About seven years agone," rejoined the witness, adding in an undertone, and as though chuckling to himself, "he's paid dear enough for that sin' then."

Ralph interrupted.

"Who was the man I supplanted, as you say — the man who has made me pay dear for it, as you think?"

No answer.

"Who?"

"No matter that," grumbled the witness. His facetiousness was gone.

There was some slight stir beneath the jurors' box.

"Tell the court the name of the man you mean."

Counsel objected to the time of the court being wasted with such questions.

Justice Hide overruled the objection.

Amid much sensation the witness gave the name of the sheriff of Cumberland, Wilfrey Lawson.

Continuing his evidence in a defiant manner, the witness said he remembered the deceased agent, James Wilson. He saw him last the day before his death. It was in Carlisle they met. Wilson showed witness a warrant with which he was charged for Ray's arrest, and told him that Ray had often threatened him in years past, and that he believed he meant to take his life. Wilson had said that he intended to be beforehand, for the warrant was a sure preventive. He also said that the Rays were an evil family; the father was a hard, ungrateful brute, who had ill repaid him for six years' labor. The mother was best, but then she was only a poor simple fool. The worst of the gang was this Ralph, who in the days of the Parliament had more than once threatened to deliver him — Wilson — to the sheriff — the other so-called sheriff, not the present good gentleman.

Ralph asked the witness three questions: —

"Have we ever met before?"

"Ey, but we'll never meet again, I reckon," said the man, with a knowing wink.

"Did you serve under me in the army of the Parliament?"

"Nowt o' t' sort," with a growl.

"Were you captured by the king's soldiers, and branded with a hot iron, as a spy of their own who was suspected of betraying them?"

"It's a' a lie. I were never brandet."

"Pull up the right sleeves of your jerkin and sark."

The witness refused.

Justice Hide called on the keeper to do so.

The witness resisted, but the sleeves were drawn up to the armpit. The flesh showed three clear marks as of an iron brand.

The man was hurried away, amid hissing in the court.

The next witness was the constable, Jonathan Briscoe. He described being sent after Wilson early on the day following that agent's departure from Carlisle. His errand was to bring back the prisoner. He arrived at Wythburn in time to be present at the inquest. The prisoner Stagg was then brought up and discharged.

Ralph asked if it was legal to accuse a man a second time of the same offense.

Justice Millet ruled that the discharge of a coroner (even though he were a resident justice as well) was no acquittal.

The witness remembered how at the inquiry the defendant Ray had defended his accomplice. He had argued that it was absurd to suppose that a man of Stagg's strength could have killed Wilson by a fall. Only a more powerful man could have done so.

"Had you any doubt as to who that more powerful man might be?"

"None, not I. I knew that the man whose game it was to have the warrant was the likest man to have grabbed it. It warn't on the body. There was not a scrap of evidence against Ray, or I should have taken him then and there."

"You tried to take him afterward, and failed."

"That's true enough. The man has the muscles of an ox."

The next two witnesses were a laborer from Wythburn, who spoke again to passing Sim on the road on the night of the murder, and meeting Wilson a mile further north; and Sim's landlord, who repeated his former evidence.

There was a stir in the court as counsel announced his last witness. A woman among the spectators was muttering some-

thing that was inaudible except to the few around her. The woman was Mrs. Garth. Willy Ray stood near her but could not catch her words.

The witness stepped into the box. There was no expression of surprise on Ralph's face when he saw who stood there to give evidence against him. It was the man who had been known in Lancaster as his "Shadow"; the same that had (with an earlier witness) been Robbie Anderson's companion in his night journey on the coach; the same that passed Robbie as he lay unconscious in Reuben Thwaite's wagon; the same that had sat in the bookseller's snug a week ago; the same that Mrs. Garth had recognized in the corridor that morning; the same that Justice Hide narrowly scrutinized when he rose in the court to claim the honor of ferreting the facts out of the woman Rushton.

He gave the name of Mark Wilson.

"Your name again?" said Justice Hide, glancing at a paper in his hand.

"Mark Wilson."

Justice Hide beckoned the sheriff and whispered something. The sheriff crushed his way into an inner room.

"The deceased James Wilson was your brother?"

"He was."

"Tell my lords and the jury what you know of this matter."

"My brother was a zealous agent of our gracious king," said the witness, speaking in a tone of great humility. "He even left his home — his wife and family — in the king's good cause."

At this moment Sim was overtaken by faintness. He staggered, and would have fallen. Ralph held him up, and appealed to the judges for a seat and some water to be given to his friend. The request was granted, and the examination continued.

The witness was on the point of being dismissed, when the sheriff reentered, and, making his way to the bench, handed a book to Justice Hide. At the same instant Sim's attention seemed to be arrested to the most feverish alertness. Jumping up from the seat on which Ralph had placed him, he cried out in a thin, shrill voice, calling on the witness to remain. There was breathless silence in the court.

"You say that your brother," cried Sim — "God in heaven,

what a monster he was — you say that he left his wife and family. Tell us, did he ever go back to them?"

"No."

"Did you ever hear of money that your brother's wife came into after he'd deserted her — that was what he did, your lordships, deserted her and her poor babby — did you ever hear of it?"

"What if I did?" replied the witness, who was apparently too much taken by surprise to fabricate a politic falsehood.

"Did you know that the waistrel tried to get hands on the money for himself?"

Sim was screaming out his questions, the sweat standing in round drops on his brow. The judges seemed too much amazed to remonstrate.

"Tell us, quick. Did he try to get hands on it?"

"Perhaps; what then?"

"And did he get it?"

"No."

"And why not — why not?"

The anger of the witness threw him off his guard.

"Because a cursed scoundrel stepped in and threatened to hang him if he touched the woman's money."

"Ay, ay! and who was that cursed scoundrel?"

No answer.

"Who? quick — who?"

"That man there!" pointing to Ralph.

Loud murmurs came from the people in the court. In the midst of them a woman was creating a commotion. She insisted on going out. She cried aloud that she would faint. It was Mrs. Garth again. The sheriff leaned over the table to ask if these questions concerned the inquiry, but Sim gave no time for protest. He never paused to think if his inquiries had any bearing on the issue.

"And now tell the court your name."

"I have told it."

"Your *true* name, and your brother's."

Justice Hide looked steadily at the witness. He held an open book in his hand.

"Your *true* name," he said, repeating Sim's inquiry.

"Mark Garth!" mumbled the witness.

The judge appeared to expect that reply.

"And your brother's?"

"Wilson Garth."

"Remove the perjurer in charge."

Sim sunk back exhausted, and looked about him as one who had been newly awakened from a dream.

The feeling among the spectators, as also among the jurors, wavered between sympathy for the accused and certainty of the truth of the accusation, when the sheriff was seen to step uneasily forward and hand a paper to counsel. Glancing hastily at the document, the lawyer rose with a smile of secure triumph and said that, circumstantial as the evidence on all essential points had hitherto been, he was now in a position to render it conclusive.

Then, handing the paper to Ralph, he asked him to say if he had ever seen it before. Ralph was overcome; gasping as if for breath, he raised one hand involuntarily to his breast.

"Tell the court how you came by the instrument in your hand."

There was no reply. Ralph had turned to Sim, and was looking into his face with what appeared to be equal pity and contrition.

The paper was worn, and had clearly been much and long folded. It was charred at one corner as if at some moment it had narrowly escaped the flames.

"My lords," said counsel, "this is the very warrant which the deceased Wilson carried from Carlisle for the arrest of the prisoner who now holds it; this is the very warrant which has been missing since the night of the murder of Wilson; and where, think you, my lords, it was found? It was found — you have heard how foolish be the wise — look now how childishly a cunning man can sometimes act, how blundering are clever rogues! — it was found this morning on the defendant Ray's person while he slept, in an inner breast pocket, which was stitched up, and seemed to have been rarely used."

"That is direct proof," said Justice Millet, with a glance at his brother on the bench. "After this there can be no doubt in any mind."

"Peradventure the prisoner can explain how he came by the document," said Justice Hide.

"Have you anything to say as to how you became possessed of it?"

"Nothing."

"Will you offer the court no explanation?"

"None."

"Would the answer criminate you?"

No reply.

For Ralph the anguish of years was concentrated in that moment. He might say where he was on the night of the murder, but then he had Sim only for witness. He thought of Robbie Anderson — why was he not here? But no, Robbie was better away — he could only clear him of this guilt by involving his father. And what evidence would avail against the tangible witness of the warrant? He had preserved that document with some vague hope of saving Sim, but here it was the serpent in the breast of both.

"This old man," he said — his altered tone startled the listeners — "this old man," he said, pointing to Sim at his side, "is as innocent of the crime as the purest soul that stands before the white throne."

"And what of yourself?"

"As for me, as for me," he added, struggling with the emotion that surged in his voice, "in the sight of Him that searcheth all hearts, I have acquittal. I have sought it long and with tears of Him before whom we are all as chaff."

"Away with him, the blasphemer!" cried Justice Millet. "Know where you are, sir? This is an assembly of Christians. Dare you call God to acquit you of your barbarous crimes?"

The people in the court took up the judge's words and broke out into a tempest of irrepressible groans. They were the very people who had cheered a week ago.

Sim cowered in a corner of the box, with his lank fingers in his long hair.

Ralph looked calmly on. He was not to be shaken now. There was one way in which he could quell that clamor and turn it into a tumult of applause, but that way should not be taken. He could extricate himself by criminating his dead father, but that he should never do. And had he not come to die? Was not this the atonement he had meant to make? It was right, it was right, and it was best. But what of Sim — must he be the cause of Sim's death, also? "This poor old man," he repeated, when the popular clamor had subsided, "he is innocent."

Sim would have risen, but Ralph guessed his purpose and kept him to his seat. At the same moment Willy Ray among the people was seen struggling toward the witness bar. Ralph

guessed his purpose and checked him, too, with a look. Willy stood as one petrified. He saw only one of two men for the murderer — Ralph or his father.

"Let us go together," whispered Sim; and in another moment the judge (Justice Millet) was summing up. He was brief; the evidence of the woman Rushton and of the recovered warrant proved everything. The case was as clear as noonday. The jury did not leave the box.

Without retiring, the jury found a verdict of guilty against both prisoners.

The crier made proclamation of silence, and the awful sentence of death was pronounced.

It was remarked that Justice Hide muttered something about a "writ of error," and that when he rose from the bench he motioned the sheriff to follow him.

II.

It was Thursday when they were condemned, and the sentence was to be carried into effect on the Thursday following. Saturday, Sunday, and Monday passed by without any event of consequence. On Tuesday the under-jailer opened the door of their prison, and the sheriff entered. Ralph stepped out face to face with him. Sim crept closer into the shadow.

"The king's warrant has arrived," he said abruptly.

"And is this all you come to tell us?" said Ralph, no less curtly.

"Ray, there is no love between you and me, and we need dissemble none."

"And no hate — at least, on my part," Ralph added.

"I had good earnest of your affections," answered the sheriff, with a sneer; "five years' imprisonment." Then waving his hand with a gesture indicative of impatience, he continued: —

"Let that be as it may. I come to talk of other matters."

Resting on a bench, he added: —

"When the trial closed on Thursday, Justice Hide, who showed you more favor than seemed to some persons of credit to be meet and seemly, beckoned me to the antechamber. There he explained that the evidence against you being mainly circumstantial, the sentence might perchance, by the leniency of the king, be commuted to one of imprisonment for life."

A cold smile passed over Ralph's face.

"But this great mercy—whereof I would counsel you to cherish no certain hope—would depend upon your being able *and willing to render an account of how you came by the document*—the warrant for your own arrest—which was found upon your person. Furnish a credible story of how you came to be possessed of that instrument, and it may occur—I say it *may* occur—that by our Sovereign's grace and favor this sentence of death can yet be put aside."

Sim had risen to his feet in obvious excitement.

Ralph calmly shook his head.

"I neither will nor can," he said emphatically.

Sim sunk back into his seat.

A look of surprise in the sheriff's face quickly gave way to a look of content and satisfaction.

"*We know each other of old, and I say there is no love* between us," he observed, "but it is by no doing of mine that you are here. Nevertheless, your response to this merciful tender shows but too plainly how well you merit your position."

"It took you five days to bring it—this merciful tender, as you term it," said Ralph.

"The king is now at Newcastle, and there at this moment is also Justice Hide, in whom, had you been an innocent man, you must have found an earnest sponsor. I bid you good day."

The sheriff rose, and, bowing to the prisoner with a ridiculous affectation of mingled deference and superiority, stepped to the door.

"Stop," said Ralph; "you say we know each other of old. That is false! To this hour you have never known, nor do you know now, why I stand here condemned to die, and doomed by a harder fate to take the life of this innocent old man. You have never known me; no, nor yourself neither—never! But you shall know both before you leave this room. Sit down."

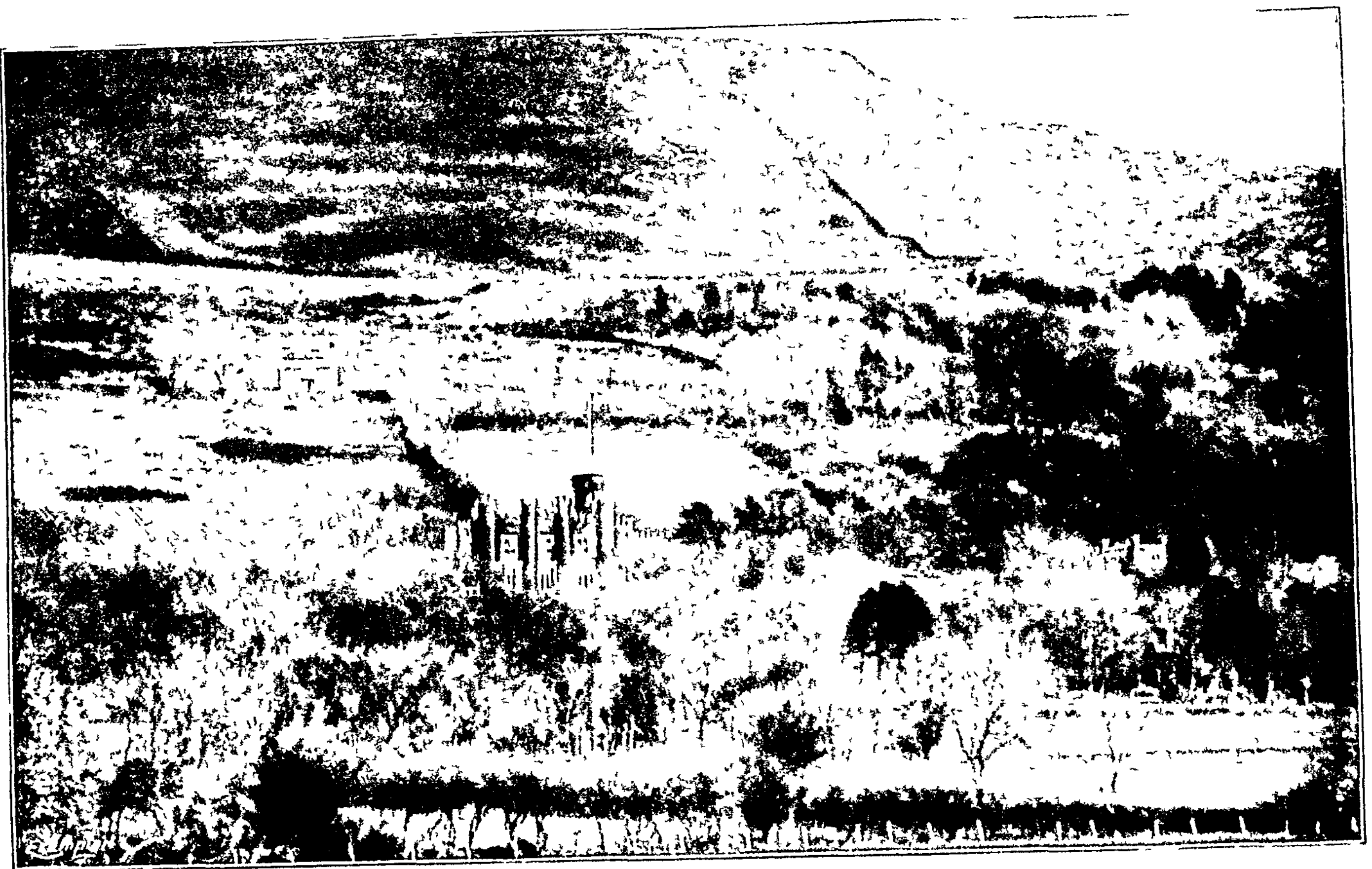
"I have no time to waste in idle disputation," said the sheriff, testily; but he sat down, nevertheless, at his prisoner's bidding, as meekly as if the positions had been reversed.

"That scar across your brow," said Ralph, "you have carried since the day I have now to speak of."

"You know it well," said the sheriff, bitterly. "You have cause to know it."

"I have," Ralph answered.

After a pause, in which he was catching the thread of a



HALL CAINE'S HOME, GREEBA CASTLE, ISLE OF MAN

story half forgotten, he continued: "You said I supplanted you in your captaincy. Perhaps so; perhaps not. God will judge between us. You went over to the Royalist camp, and you were among the garrison that had reduced this very castle. The troops of the Parliament came up one day and summoned you to surrender. The only answer your general gave us was to order the tunnel guns to fire on the white flag. It went down. We lay intrenched about you for six days. Then you sent out a dispatch assuring us that your garrison was well prepared for a siege, and that nothing would prevail with you to open your gates. That was a lie!"

"Well?"

"Your general lied; the man who carried your general's dispatch was a liar too, but he told the truth for a bribe."

"Ah! then the saints were not above warming the palm?"

"He assured our commander we might expect a mutiny in your city if we continued before it one day longer; that your castle was garrisoned only by a handful of horse and two raw undisciplined regiments of militia; that even from these desertions occurred hourly, and that some of your companies were left with only a score of men. This was at night, and we were under an order to break up next morning. That order was countermanded. Your messenger was sent back the richer by twenty pounds."

"How does this concern me?" asked the sheriff.

"You shall hear. I had been on the outposts that night, and returning to the camp I surprised two men robbing, beating, and, as I thought, murdering a third. One of the vagabonds escaped undetected, but with a blow from the butt of my musket which he will carry to his grave. The other I thrashed on the spot. He was the bailiff Scroope, whom you put up to witness against me. Their victim was the messenger from the castle, and he was James Wilson, otherwise Wilson Garth. You know this? No? Then listen. Rumor of his treachery, and of the price he had been paid for it, had already been bruited abroad, and the two scoundrels had gone out to waylay and rob him. He was lamed in the struggle, and faint from loss of blood. I took him back and bound up his wound. He limped to the end of his life."

"Still I fail to see how this touches myself," interrupted the sheriff.

"Really? I shall show you. Next morning, under cover

of a thick fog, we besieged the city. We got beneath your guns and against your gates before we were seen. Then a company of horse came out to us. *You* were there. You remember it? Yes? At one moment we came within four yards. I saw you struck down and reel out of the saddle. 'This man,' I thought, 'believes in his heart that I did him a grievous wrong. I shall now do him a signal service, though he never hear of it until the Judgment day.' I dismounted, lifted you up, bound a kerchief about your head, and was about to replace you on your horse. At that instant a musket shot struck the poor beast, and it fell dead. At the same instant one of our own men fell, and his riderless horse was prancing away. I caught it, threw you on to its back, turned its head toward the castle, and drove it hard among your troops. Do you know what happened next?"

"Happened next——" repeated the sheriff, mechanically, with astonishment written on every feature of his face.

"No, you were insensible," continued Ralph. "At that luckless moment the drum beat to arms in a regiment of foot behind us. The horse knew the call and answered it. Wheeling about, it carried you into the heart of our own camp. There you were known, tried as a deserter and imprisoned. Perhaps it was natural that you should set down your ill fortune to me."

The sheriff's eyes were riveted on Ralph's face, and for a time he seemed incapable of speech.

"Is this truth?" he asked, at length.

"God's truth," Ralph answered.

"The kerchief — what color was it?"

"Yellow."

"Any name or mark on it? I have it to this day."

"None — Wait; there was a rose picked out in worsted on one corner."

The sheriff got up, with lips compressed and wide eyes. He made for the door, and pulled at it with wasted violence. It was opened from the other side by the under-jailer, and the sheriff rushed out.

Without turning to the right or left, he went direct to the common jail. There, in the cell which Ralph had occupied between the first trial and the second one, Mark Garth, the perjurer, lay imprisoned.

"You hellhound!" cried the sheriff, grasping him by the

hair and dragging him into the middle of the floor. "I have found out your devilish treachery," he said, speaking between gusts of breath. "Did you not tell me that it was Ray who struck me this blow — this (beating with his palm the scar on his brow)? It was a lie — a damned lie!"

"It was," said the man, glaring back with eyes afire with fury.

"And did you not say it was Ray who carried me into their camp — an insensible prisoner?"

"That was a lie also," the man gasped, never struggling to release himself from the grip that held him on the floor.

"And did you not set me on to compass the death of this man but for whom I should now myself be dead?"

"You speak with marvelous accuracy, Master Lawson," returned the perjurer.

The sheriff looked down at him for a moment, and then flung him away.

"Man, man! do you know what you have done?" he cried in an altered tone. "You have charged my soul with your loathsome crime."

The perjurer curled his lip.

"It was I who gave you that blow," he said with a cruel smile, pointing with his thin finger at the sheriff's forehead. It was false.

"You devil!" cried the sheriff, "and you have killed the man who saved your brother's life, and consorted with one of two who would have been his murderers."

"I was myself the second," said the man, with fiendish calmness. It was the truth. "I carry the proof of it here," he added, touching a place at the back of his head, where the hair being shorn away disclosed a deep mark.

The sheriff staggered back with frenzied eyes and dilated nostrils. His breast heaved; he seemed unable to catch his breath.

The man looked at him with a mocking smile struggling over clinched teeth. As if a reptile had crossed his path, Wilfrey Lawson turned about and passed out without another word.

He returned to the castle and ascended the Donjon tower.

"Tell me how you became possessed of the warrant," he said. "Tell me, I beg of you, for my soul's sake as well as for your life's sake."

Ralph shook his head.

"It is not even yet too late. I shall take horse instantly for Newcastle."

Sim had crept up and, standing behind Ralph, was plucking at his jerkin.

Ralph turned about, and looked wistfully into the old man's face. For an instant his purpose wavered.

"For the love of God," cried the sheriff, "for your own life's sake, for this poor man's sake, by all that is near and dear to both, I charge you, if you are an innocent man, give me the means to prove you such!"

But again Ralph shook his head.

"Then you are resolved to die?"

"Yes! But for my old friend here — save him if you will and can."

"You will give me no word as to the warrant?"

"None."

"Then all is over."

But going at once to the stables in the courtyard, he called a stableman: —

"Saddle a horse, and bring it round to my quarters in half an hour."

In less time than that Wilfrey Lawson was riding hard toward Newcastle.

III.

Next morning at daybreak the hammering of the carpenters had ceased in the market place, and their lamps, that burned dim in their sockets, like lights across a misty sea, were one by one put out. Draped in black, the ghastly thing that they had built during the night stood between the turrets of the guard-house.

Already the townspeople were awake. People were hurrying to and fro. Many were entering the houses that looked on to the market. They were eager to secure their points of vantage from which to view that morning's spectacle.

The light came slowly. It was a frosty morning. At seven o'clock a thin vapor hung in the air and waved to and fro like a veil. It blurred the face of the houses, softened their sharp outlines, and seemed at some moments to carry them away into the distance. The sun rose soft and white as an autumn moon behind a scarf of cloud.

At half-past seven the market place was thronged. On

every inch of the ground, on every balcony, in every window, over every portico, along the roofs of the houses north, south, east, and west, clinging to the chimney stacks, hanging high upon the pyramidical turrets of the guardhouse itself, astride the arms of the old cross, peering from between the battlements of the cathedral tower and the musket lancets of the castle, were crowded, huddled, piled, the spectators of that morning's tragedy.

What a motley throng! Some in yellow and red, some in black; men, women, and children lifted shoulder-high. Some with pale faces and bloodshot eyes, some with rubicund complexion and laughing lips, some bantering as if at a fair, some on the ground hailing their fellows on the roofs. What a spectacle were they in themselves!

There, at the northeast of the market place, between Scotch Street and English Street, were half a hundred men and boys in blouses seated on the overhanging roof of the wooden shambles. They were shouting sorry jests at half a dozen hoidenish women who looked out of the windows of a building raised on pillars over a well known as Carnaby's Folly.

On the roof of the guardhouse stood five or six soldiers in red coats. One fellow, with a pipe between his lips, leaned over the parapet to kiss his hand to a little romping serving wench who giggled at him from behind a curtain in a house opposite. There was an open carriage in the very heart of that throng below. Seated within it was a stately gentleman, with a gray peaked beard, and dressed in black velvet cloak and doublet, having lace collar and ruffles; and side by side with him was a delicate young maiden muffled to the throat in fur. The morning was bitterly cold, but even this frail flower of humanity had been drawn forth by the business that was now at hand. Where is she now, and what?

A spectacle indeed, and for the eye of the mind a spectacle no less various than for the bodily organ.

Bosoms seared and foul and sick with uncleanliness. Hearts bound in the fetters of crime. Hot passions broken loose. Discord rampant. Some that smote the breast nightly in the anguish of remorse. Some that knew not where to hide from the eye of conscience the secret sin that corroded the soul.

Lonely, utterly lonely, in this dense throng were some that shuddered and laughed by turns.

There were blameless men and women too, drawn by curiosity, and by another and stronger magnet than they knew of. How would the condemned meet their end? Would it be with craven timidity or with the intrepidity of heroes, or, again, with the insensibility of brutes? Death was at hand — the inexorable, the all-powerful. How could mortal man encounter it face to face? This was the great problem then; it is the great problem now.

Two men were to be executed at eight that morning. Again and again the people turned to look at the clock. It hung by the side of the dial in the cupola of the old town-hall. How slowly moved its tardy figures! God forgive them, there were those in that crowd who would have helped forward, if they could, its passionless pulse. And a few minutes more or fewer in this world or the next, of what account were they in the great audit of men who were doomed to die?

In a room of the guardhouse the condemned sat together. They had been brought from the castle in the night.

"We shall fight our last battle to-day," said Ralph. "The enemy will take our camp, but, God willing, we shall have the victory. Never lower the flag. Cheer up! Keep a brave heart! A few swift minutes more, and all will be well!"

Sim was crouching at a fire, wringing his lean hands or clutching his long gray hair.

"Ralph, it shall never be! God will never see it done!"

"Put away the thought," replied Ralph. "God has brought us here."

Sim jumped to his feet and cried, "Then I will never witness it — never!"

Ralph put his hand gently but firmly on Sim's arm, and drew him back to his seat.

The sound of singing came from without, mingled with laughter and jeers.

"Hark!" cried Sim, "hearken to them again; nay, hark!"

Sim put his head aside and listened. Then, leaping up, he shouted yet more wildly than before, "No, no! never, never!"

Ralph took him once more by the arm, and the poor worn creature sunk into his seat with a low wail.

There was commotion in the corridors and chief chamber of the guardhouse.

"Where is the sheriff?" was the question asked on every hand.

Willy Ray was there, and had been for hours closeted with the sheriff's assistant.

"Here is the confession, duly signed," he said for the fiftieth time, as he walked nervously to and fro.

"No use, none. Without the king's pardon or reprieve the thing must be done."

"But the witnesses will be with us within the hour. Put it back but one little hour, and they must be here."

"Impossible. We hold the king's warrant, and must obey it to the letter."

"God in heaven! Do you not see yourself, do you not think that if this thing is done, two innocent men will die?"

"It is not for me to think. My part is to act."

"Where is your chief? Can you go on without him?"

"We can and must."

The clock in the market place registered ten minutes to eight. A pale-faced man in the crowd started a hymn.

"Stop his mouth," cried a voice from the roof of the shambles, "the Quaker rascal!" And the men in blouses started a catch. But the singing continued; others joined in it, and soon it swelled to a long wave of song and flowed over that human sea.

But the clock was striking, and before its last bell had ceased to ring between the lines of the hymn a window of the guardhouse was thrown open, and a number of men stepped out.

In a moment the vast concourse was hushed to the stillness of death.

"Where is Wilfrey Lawson?" whispered one.

The sheriff was not there. The under-sheriff and a burly fellow in black were standing side by side.

Among those who were near to the scaffold on the ground in front of it was one we know. Robbie Anderson had tramped the market place the long night through. He had not been able to tear himself from the spot. His eye was the first to catch sight of two men who came behind the chaplain. One of these walked with a firm step, a broad-breasted man, with an upturned face. Supported on his arm the other staggered along, his head on his breast, his hair whiter, and his step feebler

"A reprieve! A reprieve!" shouted fifty voices.

A woman fainted at the window behind. It was Rotha.

The two men were led off with staring eyes. They walked like men in a dream.

Saved! saved! saved!

Then there went up a mighty shout. It was one vast voice, more loud than the blast on the mountains, more deep than the roar of the sea!



ODE ON THE SPRING

By THOMAS GRAY.

Lo! where the rosy-bosomed Hours
  Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers
  And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of Spring:
While, whispering pleasures as they fly,
Cool Zephyrs through the clear blue sky
  Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
  A broader, browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
  O'ercanopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardor of the Crowd,
How low, how little are the Proud,
  How indigent the Great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
  The panting herds repose.
Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air
  The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honeyed spring
And float amid the liquid noon.
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gayly-gilded trim
  Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of Man:
And they that creep, and they that fly
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter thro' life's little day,
In Fortune's varying colors drest:
Brushed by the hand of rough Mischance
Or chilled by Age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
The sportive kind reply:—
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 'tis May.



CYRIL AND CECILIA.[1]

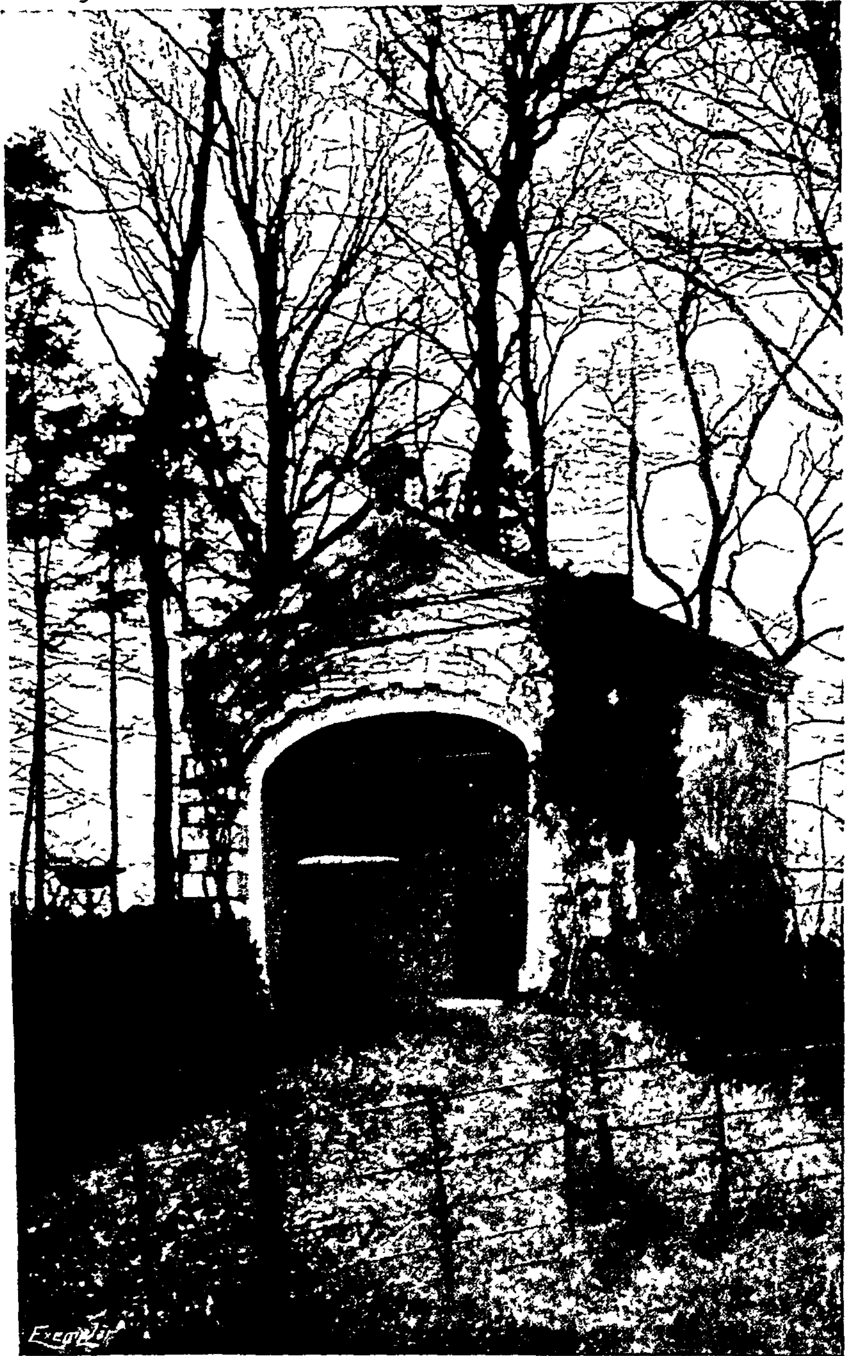
BY THE DUCHESS.

(From "Airy Fairy Lilian.")

[THE DUCHESS was the pseudonym of Mrs. Margaret Hungerford, a popular Irish novelist, born in 1855. She was the daughter of the late Rev. Canon Hamilton of Ross Carberry, and passed the greater part of her life at St. Brenda's, County Cork. She began her literary career when quite young, and wrote about thirty novels, among which may be mentioned, "Phyllis," "Molly Bawn," "Airy Fairy Lilian," "Mrs. Geoffrey," "Portia," "Lady Branksmere," etc She died in 1897.]

IT is the gloaming—that tenderest, fondest, most pensive time of all the day. As yet, night crouches on the borders of the land, reluctant to throw its dark shadow over the still smiling earth, while day is slowly, sadly receding. There is a hush over everything; above, on their leafy perches, the birds are nestling, and crooning their cradle songs; the gay breeze, lazy with its exertions of the day, has fallen asleep, so that the very grasses are silent and unstirred. An owl in the distance is hooting mournfully. There is a serenity on all around, an all-pervading stillness that moves one to sadness and fills unwit-

[1] By permission of Smith, Elder & Co. (Fcp. 8vo. Price 2s.)



GRAY'S SUMMERHOUSE NEAR STOKE POGES, WHERE THE "ELEGY" WAS WRITTEN

tingly the eyes with tears. It is the peace that follows upon grief, as though the busy world, that through all the heat and turmoil of the day has been weaping and groaning in anguish has now for a few short hours found rest.

The last roses of summer in Mrs. Arlington's garden, now that those gay young sparks, the bees, have deserted them, are growing drowsy, and hang their heavy heads dejectedly. Two or three dissipated butterflies, fond of late hours and tempted by the warmth, still float gracefully through the air.

Cecilia, coming down the garden path, rests her arms upon her wicket gate and looks towards Chetwoode.

She is dressed in exquisite white cambric fastened at the throat by a bit of lavender ribbon; through her gown here and there are touches of the same color; on her head is a ravishing little cap of the mob description, that lends an additional charm to her face, making her seem, if possible, more womanly, more lovable, than ever.

As she leans upon the gate, a last yellow sunbeam falls upon her, peeps into her eyes, takes a good-night kiss from her parted lips, and, descending slowly, lovingly, crosses her bosom, steals a little sweetness from the white rose dying on her breast, throws a golden shade upon her white gown, and finally dies chivalrously at her feet.

But not for the dead devoted sunbeam does that warm blush grow and mantle on her cheek; not for it do her pulses throb, her heart beat fast. Toward her, in his evening dress, and without his hat, regardless of consequences, comes Cyril, the quickness of his step betraying a flattering haste. As yet, although many weeks have come and gone since their first meeting, no actual words of love have been spoken between them; but each knows the other's heart, and has learned that eyes can speak a more eloquent language, can utter tenderer thoughts, than any the lips can frame.

"Again?" says Cecilia, softly, a little wonder, a great undisguised gladness in her soft gray eyes.

"Yes; I could not keep away," returns he, simply.

He does not ask to enter, but leans upon the gate from his side, very close to her. Most fair men look well in evening clothes; Cyril looks downright handsome: his blond mustache seems golden, his blue eyes almost black, in the rays of the departing sun; just now those eyes are filled with love and passionate admiration.

Her arms, half bare, with some frail shadowy lace falling over them, look rounded and velvety as a child's in the growing dusk; the fingers of her pretty, blue-veined hands are interlaced. Separating them, Cyril takes one hand between both his own and strokes it fondly, silently, yet almost absently.

Suddenly raising his head, he looks at her, his whole heart in his expression, his eyes full of purpose. Instinctively she feels the warmth, the tenderness, of his glance, and changes from a calm lily into an expectant rose. Her hand trembles within his, as though meditating flight, and then lies passive as his clasp tightens firmly upon it. Slowly, reluctantly, as though compelled by some hidden force, she turns her averted eyes to his.

"Cecilia," murmurs he, imploringly, and then — and then their lips meet, and they kiss each other solemnly, with a passionate tenderness, knowing it is their betrothal they are sealing.

"I wish I had summoned courage to kiss you a week ago," he says presently. He is inside the gate now, and seems to have lost, in this shamefully short time, all the hesitation and modesty that a few minutes ago were so becoming. His arm is around her; even as he makes this rather *risqué* remark, he stoops and embraces her again, without ever having the grace to ask permission, while she (that I should live to say it of Cecilia!) never reproves him.

"Why?" she asks, smiling up at him.

"See how I have wasted seven good days," returns he, drinking in gladly all the beauty of her face and smile. "This day last week I might have been as happy as I am now — whereas I was the most miserable wretch alive, the victim of suspense."

"You bore your misery admirably; had you not told me, I should never have guessed your wretchedness. Besides, how do you know I should have been so kind to you seven long days ago?"

"I know it — because you love me."

"And how do you know that either?" asks she, with new-born coquetry that sits very sweetly upon her. "Cyril, when did you begin to love me?"

"The very moment I first saw you."

"No, no, I do not want compliments from *you;* I want the very honest truth. Tell me."

"I have told you. The honest truth is this. That morning after your arrival, when I restored your terrier to you, I fell in love with you; you little thought then, when I gave your dog into your keeping, I was giving my heart also."

"No," in a low, soft voice, that somehow has a smile in it, "how could I? I am glad you loved me always — that there was no time when I was indifferent to you. I think love at first sight must be the sweetest and truest of all."

"You have the best of it, then, have you not?" with a rather forced laugh. "Not only did I love you from the first moment I saw you, but you are the only woman I really ever cared for, while you," with some hesitation, and turning his eyes steadily away from hers, "you — of course — did love — once before."

"Never!"

The word comes with startling vehemence from between her lips, the new and brilliant gladness of her face dies from it. A little chill shudder runs through all her frame, turning her to stone; drawing herself with determination from his encircling arms, she stands somewhat away from him.

"It is time I told you my history," she says in cold, changed tones, through which quivers a ring of pain, while her face grows suddenly as pale, as impenetrable, as when they were yet quite strangers to each other. "Perhaps when you hear it you may regret your words of to-night." There is a doubt, a weariness, in her voice that almost angers him.

"Nonsense!" he says roughly, the better to hide the emotion he feels; "don't be romantic; nobody commits murder, or petty larceny, or bigamy nowadays, without being found out; unpleasant mysteries, and skeletons in the closet, have gone out of fashion. We put all our skeletons in the *Times* now, no matter how we may have to blush for their nakedness. I don't want to hear anything about your life if it makes you unhappy to tell it."

"It doesn't make me unhappy."

"But it does. Your face has grown quite white, and your eyes are full of tears. Darling, I won't have you distress yourself for me."

"I have not committed any of the crimes you mention, or any other particular crime," returns she, with a very wan little smile. "I have only been miserable ever since I can remember.

I have not spoken about myself to any one for years — except one friend; but now I should like to tell you everything."

"But not there!" holding out his hands to her reproachfully. "I don't believe I could hear you if you spoke from such a distance." There is exactly half a yard of sward between them. "If you are willfully bent on driving us both to the verge of melancholy, at least let us meet our fate together."

Here he steals his arm round her once more, and, thus supported, and with her head upon his shoulder, she commences her short story: —

"Perhaps you know my father was a Major in the Scots Greys; your brother knew him; his name was Duncan."

Cyril starts involuntarily.

"Ah, you start. You too knew him?"

"Yes, slightly."

"Then," in a curiously hard voice, "you knew nothing good of him. Well," with a sigh, "no matter; afterward you can tell me what it was. When I was eighteen he brought me home from school, not that he wanted my society — I was rather in his way than otherwise, and it wasn't a good way — but because he had a purpose in view. One day, when I had been home three months, a visitor came to see us. He was introduced to me by my father. He was young, dark, not ugly, well-mannered," here she pauses as though to recover breath, and then breaks out with a passion that shakes all her slight frame, "but hateful, vile, *loathsome.*"

"My darling, don't go on; I don't want to hear about him," implores Cyril, anxiously.

"But I must tell you. He possessed that greatest of all virtues in my father's eyes — wealth. He was rich. He admired me; I was very pretty then. He dared to say he loved me. He asked me to marry him, and — I refused him."

As though the words are forced from her, she utters them in short, unequal sentences; her lips have turned the color of death.

"I suppose he went then to my father, and they planned it all between them, because at this time he — that is, my father — began to tell me he was in debt, hopelessly, irretrievably in debt. Among others he mentioned certain debts of (so called) honor, which, if not paid within a given time, would leave him not only a beggar, but a disgraced one upon the face of the earth; and I believed him. He worked upon my feelings day

by day, with pretended tears, with vows of amendment. I don't know," bitterly, "what his share of the bargain was to be, but I do know he toiled for it conscientiously. I was young, unusually so for my age, without companions, romantic, impressionable. It seemed to me a grand thing to sacrifice myself and thereby save my father, and if I would only consent to marry Mr. Arlington he had promised not only to avoid dice, but to give up his habits of intemperance. It is an old story, is it not? No doubt you know it by heart. Crafty age and foolish youth—what chance had I? One day I gave in, I said I would marry Mr. Arlington, and he sold me to him three weeks later. We were married."

Here her voice fails her again, and a little moan of agonized recollection escapes her. Cyril, clasping her still closer to him, presses a kiss upon her brow. At the sweet contact of his lips she sighs, and two large tears gathering in her eyes roll slowly down her cheeks.

"A week after my wretched marriage," she goes on, "I discovered accidentally that my father had lied to me and tricked me. His circumstances were not so bad as he had represented to me, and it was on the condition that he was to have a certain income from Mr. Arlington yearly that he had persuaded me to marry him. He did not long enjoy it. He died," slowly, "two months afterward. Of my life with—my husband I shall not tell you; the recital would only revolt you. Only to think of it now makes me feel deadly ill; and often from my dreams, as I live it all over again, I start, cold with horror and disgust. It did not last long, which was merciful; six months after our marriage he eloped with an actress and went to Vienna."

"The blackguard! the scoundrel!" says Cyril, between his teeth, drawing his breath sharply.

"I never saw him again. In a little while I received tidings of his death: he had been stabbed in a brawl in some drinking house, and only lived a few hours after it. And I was once more free."

She pauses, and involuntarily stretches forth both her hands into the twilight, as one might who long in darkness, being thrust into the full light of day, seeks to grasp and retain it.

"When I heard of his death," she says, turning to Cyril, and speaking in a clear, intense tone, "I *laughed!* For the first time for many months, I laughed aloud! I declared my thankfulness in a distinct voice. My heart beat with honest,

undisguised delight when I knew I should never see him again, should never in all the years to come shiver and tremble in his hated presence. He was dead, and I was heartily glad of it."

She stops, in terrible agitation. An angry fire gleams in her large gray eyes. She seems for the moment to have utterly forgotten Cyril's nearness, as in memory she lives over again all the detested past. Cyril lays his hand lightly upon her shoulder, her eyes meet his, and then the anger dies from them. She sighs heavily, and then goes on: —

"After that I don't know what happened for a long time, because I got brain fever, and, but for one friend, who all through had done his best for me, I should have died. He and his sister nursed me through it, and brought me back to life again; but," mournfully, "they could not restore to me my crushed youth, my ruined faith, my girlish hopes. A few months had changed me from a mere child into a cold, unloving woman."

"Don't say that," says Cyril, gently.

"Until now," returns she, looking at him with eyes full of the most intense affection; "now all is different."

"Beloved, how you have suffered!" he says, pressing her head down again upon his breast, and caressing with loving fingers her rich hair. "But it is all over, and, if I can make you so, you shall be happy in the future. And your one friend? Who was he?"

She hesitates perceptibly, and a blush creeping up dyes her pale face crimson.

"Perhaps I know," said Cyril, an unaccountable misgiving at his heart. "Was it Colonel Trant? Do not answer me if you do not wish it," very gently.

"Yes, it was he. There is no reason why I should not answer you."

"No?"

"No."

"He asked Guy to let you have the Cottage?"

"Yes; I had wearied of everything, and, though by some chance I had come in for all Mr. Arlington's property, I only cared to go away and hide myself somewhere where I should find quiet and peace. I tried several places, but I was always restless until I came here." She smiles faintly.

Cyril, after a pause, says hesitatingly: —

"Cecilia, did you ever care for — for — Trant?"

"Never; did you imagine that? I never cared for any but you, I never shall again. And you, Cyril," the tears r ing thickly to her eyes, "do you still think you can love the daughter of one bad man, the wife of another? I hardly think myself as good as other women when I remer all the hateful scenes I have passed through."

"I shall treat you to a crowning scene if you ever dare that again," says Cyril, whose spirits are rising now she denied having any affection for Trant. "And if every rela you ever had was as bad as bad could be, I should adore yo the same. I can't say any more."

"You needn't," returns she, laughing a little. "Oh, C how sweet it is to be beloved, to me especially, who never (until now) had any love offered me; at least," correcting self hastily, "any I cared to accept!"

"But you had a lover?" asks he, earnestly.

"Yes, one."

"Trant again?" letting his teeth close somewhat sharpl his underlip.

"Yes."

"Cecilia, I am afraid you liked that fellow once. C confess it."

"No, indeed, not in the way you mean; but in every c way more than I can tell you. I should be the most ung ful wretch alive if it were otherwise. As a true friend, I him."

"How dare you use such a word to any one but me?" Cyril, bending to smile into her eyes. "I warn you not t it again, or I shall be dangerously and outrageously jeal Tears in your eyes still, my sweet? Let me kiss them aw poor eyes! surely they have wept enough in their time to mit of their only smiling in the future."

When they have declared over and over again (in diffe languages every time, of course) the everlasting affection feels for the other, Cecilia says: —

"How late it grows! and you are in your evening d and without a hat. Have you dined?"

"Not yet; but I don't want any dinner." (By this remark, O reader, you may guess the depth and sincerit his love.) "We generally dine at half-past seven, but to-n we are to starve until eight to oblige Florence, who has l

spending the day somewhere. So I dressed early and came down to see you."

"At eight," says Cecilia, alarmed; "it is almost that now. You must go, or Lady Chetwoode will be angry with me, and I don't want any one belonging to you to think bad thoughts of me."

"There is plenty of time: it can't be nearly eight yet. Why, it is only half an hour since I came."

"It is a quarter to eight," says Cecilia, solemnly. "Do go, and come again as early as you can to-morrow."

"You will be glad to see me?"

"Yes, if you come very early."

"And you are sure, my own darling, that you really love me?"

"Quite, *quite* sure," tenderly.

"What a bore it is having to go home this lovely evening!" discontentedly. "Certainly 'Time was made for slaves.' Well"—with a sigh—"good night. I suppose I must go. I shall run down directly after breakfast. Good night, my own, my dearest."

"Good night, Cyril."

"What a cold farewell! I shan't go away at all if you don't say something kinder."

Standing on tiptoe, Cecilia lays her arms around his neck.

"Good night, my—darling," she whispers tremulously; and with a last lingering caress they part as though years were about to roll by before they can meet again.

* * * * * * *

The words recited by Mr. Chesney with much *empressement* soar upward and gain Guy's ear; Archibald is pointing his quotations with many impassioned glances and much tender emphasis; all of which is rather thrown away upon Lilian, who is not in the least sentimental.

"Read something livelier, Archie," she says, regarding her growing chain with unlimited admiration. "There is rather much honey about that."

"If you can snub Shelley, I'm sure I don't know what it is you *do* like," returns he, somewhat disgusted. A slight pause ensues, filled up by the faint noise of the leaves of Chesney's volume as he turns them over impatiently.

"'Oh, my Luve's like a red, red rose,'" he begins bravely; but Lilian instantly suppresses him.

"Don't," she says, "that's worse. I always think what a horrid 'luve' she must have been. Fancy a girl with cheeks like that rose over there! Fancy writing a sonnet to a milk-maid! Go on, however; the other lines are rather pretty."

"Oh, my love's like a melody
That's sweetly played in tune,"

reads Archie, and then stops.

"It is pretty," he says agreeably; "but if you had heard that last word persistently called 'chune,' I think it would have taken the edge off your fancy for it. I had an uncle who adored that little poem, but he *would* call the word 'chune,' and it rather spoiled the effect. He's dead," says Mr. Chesney, laying down his book, "but I think I see him now."

"In the pride of youth and beauty,
With a garland on his brow,"

quotes Lilian, mischievously.

"Well, not quite. Rather in an exceedingly rusty suit of evening clothes at the Opera. I took him there, in a weak moment, to hear the 'late lamented Titiens' sing her choicest song in 'Il Trovatore'—you know it?—well, when it was over and the whole house was in a perfect uproar of applause, I turned and asked him what he thought of it, and he instantly said he thought it was a 'very pretty "chune"!' Fancy Titiens singing a 'chune'! I gave him up after that, and carefully avoided his society. Poor old chap, he didn't bear malice, however, as he died a year later and left me all his money."

"More than you deserved," says Lilian.

Here Cyril and Taffy appearing on the scene cause a diversion. They both simultaneously fling themselves upon the grass at Lilian's feet, and declare themselves completely used up.

"Let us have our tea out here," says Lilian, gayly, "and enjoy our summer to the end." Springing to her feet, she turns toward the balcony, careless of the fact that she has destroyed the lovely picture she made sitting on the greensward surrounded by her attendant swains.

"Florence, come down here, and let us have tea on the grass," she calls out pleasantly to Miss Beauchamp.

The next day is dark and lowering, to Lilian's great joy, who, now she is prevented by lameness from going for one of

her loved rambles, finds infinite satisfaction in the thought that even were she quite well, it would be impossible for her to stir out of doors. According to her mode of arguing, this is one day not lost.

About two o'clock Archibald returns, in time for luncheon, and to resume his care of Lilian, who gives him a gentle scolding for his desertion of her in her need. He is full of information about town and their mutual friends there, and imparts it freely.

"Everything is as melancholy up there as it can be," he says, "and very few men to be seen; the clubs are deserted—all shooting or hunting, no doubt. The rain was falling in torrents all the day."

"Poor Archie! you have been having a bad time of it, I fear."

"In spite of the weather and her ruddy locks, Lady Belle Damascene has secured the prize of the season, out of season. She is engaged to Lord Wyntermere: it is not yet publicly announced, but I called to see her mother for five minutes, and so great was her exultation she could not refrain from whispering the delightful intelligence into my ear. Lady Belle is staying with his people now in Sussex."

"Certainly, 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder.' She is painfully ugly," says Miss Beauchamp. "Such feet, such hands, and such a shocking complexion!"

"She is very kind-hearted and amiable," says Cyril.

"That is what is always said of a plain woman," retorts Florence. "When you hear a girl is amiable, always conclude she is hideous. When one's trumpeter is in despair, he says that."

"I am sure Lord Wyntermere must be a young man of sound good sense," says Lilian, who never agrees with Florence. "If she has a kind heart he will never be disappointed in her. And, after all, there is no such great advantage to be derived from beauty. When people are married for four or five years, I dare say they quite forget whether the partner of their joys and sorrows was originally lovely or the reverse; custom deadens perception."

"It is better to be good than beautiful," says Lady Chetwoode, who abhors ugly women; "you know what Carew says:—

"But a smooth and steadfast mind,
Gentle thoughts and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires:
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks or lips or eyes."

"Well done, Madre," says Cyril. "You are coming out. I had no idea you were so gifted. Your delivery is perfect."

"And what are you all talking about?" continues Lady Chetwoode: "I think Belle Damascene very sweet to look at. In spite of her red hair, and a good many freckles, and—and—a rather short nose, her expression is very lovable; when she smiles I always feel inclined to kiss her. She is like her mother, who is one of the best women I know."

"If you encourage my mother she will end by telling you Lady Belle is a beauty and a reigning toast," says Guy, *sotto voce*.

Lady Chetwoode laughs, and Lilian says:—

"What is every one wearing now, Archie?"

"There is nobody to wear anything. For the rest, they had all on some soft, shiny stuff like the dress you wore the night before last."

"What an accurate memory you have!" says Florence, letting her eyes rest on Guy's for a moment, though addressing Chesney.

"Satin," translates Lilian, unmoved. "And their bonnets?"

"Oh, yes! they all wore bonnets or hats, I don't know which," vaguely.

"Naturally; mantillas are not yet in vogue. You are better than 'Le Follet,' Archie; your answers are so satisfactory. Did you meet any one we know?"

"Hardly any one. By the bye"—turning curiously to Sir Guy—"was Trant here to-day?"

"No," surprised: "why do you ask?"

"Because I met him at Truston this morning. He got out of the train by which I went on—it seems he has been staying with the Bulstrodes—and I fancied he was coming on here, but had not time to question him, as I barely caught the train; another minute's delay and I should have been late."

Archibald rambles on about his near escape of being late for the train, while his last words sink deep into the minds of Guy and Cyril. The former grows singularly silent; a de-

pressed expression gains upon his face. Cyril, on the contrary, becomes feverishly gay, and with his mad observations makes merry Lilian laugh heartily.

But when luncheon is over and they all disperse, a gloom falls upon him: his features contract; doubt and a terrible suspicion, augmented by slanderous tales that forever seem to be poured into his ears, make havoc of the naturally kind expression that characterizes his face, and with a stifled sigh he turns and walks toward the billiard room.

Guy follows him. As Cyril enters the doorway, he enters too, and, closing the door softly, lays his hand upon his shoulder.

"You heard, Cyril?" he says with exceeding gentleness.

"Heard what?" turning somewhat savagely upon him.

"My dear fellow"—affectionate entreaty in his tone—"do not be offended with me. Will you not listen, Cyril? It is very painful to me to speak; but how can I see my brother so—so shamefully taken in, without uttering a word of warning?"

"If you were less tragic and a little more explicit, it might help matters," replies Cyril, with a sneer, and a short, unpleasant laugh. "Do speak plainly."

"I will, then," desperately, "since you desire it. There is more between Trant and Mrs. Arlington than we know of. I do not speak without knowledge. From several different sources I have heard the same story—of his infatuation for some woman, and of his having taken a house for her in some remote spot. No names were mentioned, mind; but, from what I have unwillingly listened to, it is impossible not to connect these evil whispers that are afloat with him and her. Why does he come so often to the neighborhood and yet never dare to present himself at Chetwoode?"

"And you believe Trant capable of so far abusing the rights of friendship as to ask you—*you*—to supply the house in the remote spot?"

"Unfortunately I must."

"You are speaking of your friend," with a bitter sneer, "and you can coldly accuse him of committing so blackguardly an action?"

"If all I have heard be true (and I have no reason to doubt it), he is no longer any friend of mine," says Guy, haughtily. "I shall settle with *him* later on when I have clearer evidence; in the mean time it almost drives me mad to think he should

have dared to bring down here, so close to my mother, his ——"

"What?" cries Cyril, fiercely, thrusting his brother from him with passionate violence. "What is it you would say? Take care, Guy, take care, you have gone too far already. From whom, pray, have you learned your infamous story?"

"I beg your pardon," Guy says gently, extreme regret visible in his countenance. "I should not have spoken so, under the circumstances. It was not from one alone, but from several, I heard what I now tell you — though I must again remind you that no names were mentioned: still, I could not help drawing my own conclusions."

"They lied!" returns Cyril, passionately, losing his head, "you may tell them so for me. And you" — half choking — "you lie too when you repeat such vile slanders."

"It is useless to argue with you," Guy says coldly, the blood mounting hotly to his forehead at Cyril's insulting words, while his expression grows stern and impenetrable: "I waste time. Yet this last word I will say: Go down to the Cottage — now — this moment — and convince yourself of the truth of what I have said."

He turns angrily away; while Cyril, half mad with indignation and unacknowledged fear, follows this final piece of advice, and almost unconsciously leaving the house, takes the unwonted direction, and hardly draws breath until the trim hedges and the pretty rustic gates of the Cottage are in view.

The day is showery, threatening since dawn, and now the rain is falling thickly, though he heeds it not at all.

As with laggard steps he draws still nearer the abode of her he loves yet does not wholly trust, the sound of voices smites upon his ear. He is standing upon the very spot — somewhat elevated — that overlooks the arbor where so long ago Miss Beauchamp stood and learned his acquaintance with Mrs. Arlington. Here now he too stays his steps, and gazes spellbound upon what he sees before him.

In the arbor, with his back turned to Cyril, is a man, tall, elderly, with an iron-gray mustache. Though not strictly handsome, he has a fine and very military bearing, and a figure quite unmistakable to one who knows him; with a sickly chill at his heart, Cyril acknowledges him to be Colonel Trant.

Cecilia is beside him. She is weeping bitterly, but quietly,

and with one hand conceals her face with her handkerchief. The other is fast imprisoned in both of Trant's.

A film settles upon Cyril's eyes, a dull faintness overpowers him, involuntarily he places one hand upon the trunk of a near elm to steady himself; yet through the semi-darkness, the strange, unreal feeling that possesses him, the voices still reach him cruelly distinct.

"Do not grieve so terribly; it breaks my heart to see you, darling, *darling*," says Trant, in a low, impassioned tone, and raising the hand he holds, he presses his lips to it tenderly. The slender white fingers tremble perceptibly under the caress, and then Cecilia says in a voice hardly audible through her tears: —

"I am so unhappy! it is all my fault; knowing you loved me, I should have told you before of——"

But her voice breaks the spell; Cyril, as it meets his ears, rouses himself with a start. Not once again does he even glance in her direction, but with a muttered curse at his own folly, turns and goes swiftly homeward.

A very frenzy of despair and disappointment rages within him; to have so loved—to be so foully betrayed. Her tears, her sorrow (connected no doubt with some early passages between her and Trant), because of their very poignancy, only render him the more furious.

On reaching Chetwoode he shuts himself into his own room, and, feigning an excuse, keeps himself apart from the rest of the household all the remainder of the evening and the night. "Knowing you loved me"—the words ring in his ears. Ay, she knew it—who should know it better?—but had carefully kept back all mention of the fact when pressed by him (Cyril) upon the subject. All the world knew what he had been the last to discover. And what was it her tender conscience was accusing her of not having told Trant before?—of her flirtation, as no doubt she mildly termed all the tender looks and speeches, and clinging kisses, and loving protestations so freely bestowed upon Cyril—of her flirtation, no doubt.

The next morning, after a sleepless night, he starts for London, and there spends three reckless, miserable days that leave him wan and aged, through reason of the conflict he is waging with himself. After which a mad desire to see again the cause of all his misery, to openly accuse her of her treachery, to declare to her all the irreparable mischief she has done,

the utter ruin she has made of his life, seizes hold upon him, and, leaving the great city, and reaching Truston, he goes straight from the station to the Cottage once so dear.

In her garden Cecilia is standing all alone. The wind is sighing plaintively through the trees that arch above her head, the thousand dying leaves are fluttering to her feet. There is a sense of decay and melancholy in all around that harmonizes exquisitely with the dejection of her whole manner. Her attitude is sad and drooping, her air depressed; there are tears, and an anxious, expectant look in her gray eyes.

"Pining for her lover, no doubt," says Cyril, between his teeth (in which supposition he is right); and then he opens the gate, and goes quickly up to her.

As she hears the well-known click of the latch she turns, and, seeing him, lets fall unheeded to the ground the basket she is holding, and runs to him with eyes alight, and soft cheeks tinged with a lovely generous pink, and holds out her hands to him with a little low glad cry.

"At last, truant!" she exclaims joyfully; "after three whole long, long days; and what has kept you from me? Why, Cyril, Cyril!"—recoiling, while a dull ashen shade replaces the gay tinting of her cheeks—"what has happened? How oddly you look! You are in trouble?"

"I am," in a changed harsh tone she scarcely realizes to be his, moving back with a gesture of contempt from the extended hands that would so gladly have clasped his. "In so far you speak the truth: I have discovered all. One lover, it appears, was not sufficient for you, you should dupe another for your amusement. It is an old story, but none the less bitter. No, it is useless your speaking," staying her with a passionate movement: "I tell you I know *all!*"

"All what?" she asks. She has not removed from his her lustrous eyes, though her lips have turned very white.

"Your perfidy!"

"Cyril, explain yourself," she says in a low, agonized tone, her pallor changing to a deep crimson. And to Cyril hateful certainty appears if possible more certain by reason of this luckless blush.

"Ay, you may well change countenance," he says with suppressed fury, in which keen agony is blended: "have you yet the grace to blush? As to explanation, I scarcely think you can require it; yet, as you demand it, you shall have it.

For weeks I have been hearing of you tales in which your name and Trant's were always mingled; but I disregarded them; I madly shut my ears and was deaf to them; I would not believe, until it was too late, until I saw and learned beyond dispute the folly of my faith. I was here last Friday evening."

"Yes?" calmly, though in her soft eyes a deep well of bitterness had sprung.

"Well, you were there, in that arbor" — pointing to it — "where *we*" — with a scornful laugh — "so often sat; but then you had a more congenial companion. Trant was with you. He held your hand, he caressed it; he called you his 'darling,' and you allowed it, though indeed, why should you not? doubtless it is a customary word from him to you! And then you wept as though your heart, your *heart*" — contemptuously — "would break. Were you confessing to him your coquetry with me? and perhaps obtaining an easy forgiveness?"

"No, I was not," quietly, though there is immeasurable scorn in her tone.

"No?" slightingly. "For what, then, were you crying?"

"Sir" — with a first outward sign of indignation — "I refuse to tell you. By what right do you now ask the question? Yesterday, nay, an hour since, I should have felt myself bound to answer any inquiry of yours, but not now. The tie between us, a frail one as it seems to me, is broken; our engagement is at an end: I shall not answer you!"

"Because you dare not," retorts he, fiercely, stung by her manner.

"I think you dare too much when you venture so to address me," in a low, clear tone. "And yet, as it is in all human probability the last time we shall ever meet, and as I would have you remember all your life long the gross injustice you have done me, I shall satisfy your curiosity. But recollect, sir, these are indeed the final words that shall pass between us.

"A year ago Colonel Trant so far greatly honored me as to ask me to marry him; for many reasons I then refused. Twice since I came to Chetwoode he has been to see me — once to bring me law papers of some importance, and last Friday to again ask me to be his wife. Again I refused. I wept then, because, unworthy as I am, I knew I was giving pain to the truest and, as I know now" — with a faint trembling in her voice, quickly subdued — "the *only* friend I have! When de-

clining his proposal, I gave him my reason for doing so! I told him I loved another! That other was you!"

Casting this terrible revenge in his teeth, she turns, and, walking majestically into the house, closes the door with significant haste behind her.

This is the one solitary instance of inhospitality shown by Cecilia in all her life. Never until now was she known to shut her door in the face of trouble. And surely Cyril's trouble at this moment is sore and needy!

To disbelieve Cecilia when face to face with her is impossible. Her eyes are truth itself. Her whole manner, so replete with dignity and offended pride, declares her innocent. Cyril stands just where she had left him, in stunned silence, for at least a quarter of an hour, repeating to himself miserably all that she has said, and reminding himself with cold-blooded cruelty of all he has said to her.

At the end of this awful fifteen minutes he bethinks himself his hair must now, if ever, be turned gray; and then, a happier and more resolute thought striking him, he takes his courage in his two hands, and, walking boldly up to the hall door, knocks, and demands admittance with really admirable composure. Abominable composure! thinks Cecilia, who, in spite of her stern determination never to know him again, has been watching him covertly from behind a handkerchief and a bedroom curtain all this time, and is now stationed at the top of the staircase, with dim eyes, but very acute ears.

"Yes," Kate tells him, "her mistress is at home," and forthwith shows him into the bijou drawing-room. After which she departs to tell her mistress of his arrival.

Three minutes, that to Cyril's excited fancy lengthen themselves into twenty, pass away slowly, and then Kate returns.

"Her mistress' compliments, and she has a terrible headache, and will Mr. Chetwoode be so kind as to excuse her?"

Mr. Chetwoode on this occasion is not kind. "He is sorry," he stammers, "but if Mrs. Arlington could let him see her for five minutes, he would not detain her longer. He has something of the utmost importance to say to her."

His manner is so earnest, so pleading, that Kate, who scents at least a death in the air, retires full of compassion for the "pore gentleman." And then another three minutes, that now to the agitated listener appear like forty, drag themselves into the past.

Suspense is growing intolerable, when a well-known step in the hall outside makes his heart beat almost to suffocation. The door is opened slowly and Mrs. Arlington comes in.

"You have something to say to me?" she asks curtly, unkindly, standing just inside the door, and betraying an evident determination not to sit down for any consideration upon earth. Her manner is uncompromising and forbidding, but her eyes are very red. There is rich consolation in this discovery.

"I have," replies Cyril, openly confused now that it has come to the point.

"Say it, then. I am here to listen to you. My servant tells me it is something of the deepest importance."

"So it is. In all the world there is nothing so important to me, Cecilia" — coming a little nearer to her — "it is that I want your forgiveness; I ask your pardon very humbly, and I throw myself upon your mercy. You must forgive me!"

"Forgiveness seems easy to you, who cannot feel," replies she, haughtily, turning as though to leave the room; but Cyril intercepts her, and places his back against the door.

"I cannot let you go until you are friends with me again," he says in deep agitation.

"Friends!"

"Think what I have gone through. *You* have only suffered for a few minutes, *I* have suffered for three long days. Think of it. My heart was breaking all the time. I went to London hoping to escape thought, and never shall I forget what I endured in that detestable city. Like a man in a dream I lived, scarcely seeing, or, if seeing, only trying to elude, those I knew. At times ——"

"You went to London?"

"Yes, that is how I have been absent for three days; I have hardly slept or eaten since last I saw you!"

Here Cecilia is distinctly conscious of a feeling of satisfaction; next to a man's dying for you, the sweetest thing is to hear of a man starving for you!

"Sometimes," goes on Cyril, piling up the agony higher and higher, and speaking in his gloomiest tones, "I thought it would be better if I put an end to it once for all, by blowing out my brains."

"How dare you speak to me like this?" Cecilia says in a trembling voice: "it is horrible. You would commit suicide!

Am I not unhappy enough, that you must seek to make me more so? Why should you blow your brains out?"—with a shudder.

"Because I could not live without you. Even now"—reproachfully—"when I see you looking so coldly upon me, I almost wish I had put myself out of the way for good."

"Cyril, I forbid you to talk like this."

"Why? I don't suppose you care whether I am dead or alive." This artful speech, uttered in a heartbroken tone, does immense execution.

"If you were dead," begins she, forlornly, and then stops short, because her voice fails her, and two large tears steal silently down her cheeks.

"Would you care?" asks Cyril, going up to her and placing one arm gently round her; being unrepulsed, he gradually strengthens this arm with the other. "Would you?"

"I hardly know."

"Darling, don't be cruel. I was wrong, terribly, unpardonably wrong ever to doubt your sweet truth; but when one has stories perpetually dinned into one's ears, one naturally grows jealous of one's shadow, when one loves as I do."

"And pray who told you all these stories?"

"Never mind."

"But I do mind," with an angry sob. "What! you are to hear lies of me, and to believe them, and I am not even to know who told you them! I do mind, and I insist on knowing."

"Surely it cannot signify now, when I tell you I don't believe them."

"It does signify, and I should be told. But, indeed, I need not ask," with exceeding bitterness; "I know. It was your brother, Sir Guy. He has always (why, I know not) been a cruel enemy of mine."

"He only repeated what he heard. He is not to be blamed!"

"It *was* he, then?" quickly. "But 'blamed'?—of course not; no one is in the wrong, I suppose, but poor me! I think, sir"—tremulously—"it would be better you should go home, and forget you ever knew any one so culpable as I am. I should be afraid to marry into a family that could so misjudge me as yours does. Go, and learn to forget me."

"I can go, of course, if you desire it," laying hold of his hat; "that is a simple matter: but I cannot promise to forget To some people it may be easy; to me impossible."

"Nothing is impossible. The going is the first step. Oblivion"—with a sigh—"will quickly follow."

"I do not think so. But, since you wish my absence——"

He moves toward the door with lowered head and dejected manner.

"I did not say I wished it," in faltering tones; "I only requested you to leave me for your own sake, and because I would not make your people unhappy. Though"—piteously—"it should break my heart, I would still bid you go."

"Would it break your heart?" flinging his hat into a corner (for my own part, I don't believe he ever meant going); coming up to her he folds her in his arms. "Forgive me, I entreat you," he says, "for what I shall never forgive myself."

The humbleness of this appeal touches Cecilia's tender heart. She makes no effort to escape from his encircling arms; she even returns one out of his many caresses.

"To think you could behave so badly to me!" she whispers reproachfully.

"I am a brute! I know it."

"Oh, no! indeed you are not," says Mrs. Arlington. "Well, yes"—drawing a long breath—"I forgive you; but *promise*, promise you will never distrust me again."

Of course he gives the required promise, and peace is once more restored.

"I shall not be content with an engagement any longer," Cyril says presently. "I consider it eminently unsatisfactory. Why not marry me at once? I have nine hundred a year, and a scrap of an estate a few miles from this—by the bye, you have never yet been to see your property—and, if you are not afraid to venture, I think we might be very happy, even on that small sum."

"I am not afraid of anything with you," she says in her calm, tender fashion: "and money has nothing to do with it. If," with a troubled sigh, "I ever marry you, I shall not come to you empty-handed."

"'If: dost thou answer me with ifs'?" quotes he, gayly. "I tell you, sweet, there is no such word in the dictionary. I shall only wait a favorable opportunity to ask my mother's consent to our marriage."

"And if she refuses it?"

"Why, then I shall marry you without hers, or yours, or the consent of any one in the world."

"You jest," she says, tears gathering in her large appealing eyes. "I would not have you make your mother miserable."

"Above all things, do not let me see tears in your eyes again," he says quickly. "I forbid it. For one thing it makes me wretched, and"—softly—"it makes me feel sure *you* are wretched, which is far worse. Cecilia, if you don't instantly dry those tears I shall be under the painful necessity of kissing them away. I tell you I shall get my mother's consent very readily. When she sees you, she will be only too proud to welcome such a daughter."

Soon after this they part, more in love with each other than ever.



LIFE.

BY MRS BARBAULD.

LIFE! I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we met
I own to me's a secret yet.

Life! we've been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear—
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;
—Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not Good Night,—but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good Morning.



THE ADVENTURE IN THE CAVE.[1]

BY H RIDER HAGGARD.

(From "She.")

[HENRY RIDER HAGGARD, English novelist, was born at Bradenham, Norfolk, June 22, 1856. He entered the colonial service in 1875 as private secretary to Sir Henry Bulwer at Natal, and subsequently served on the staff of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, special commissioner to the Transvaal, during the temporary annexation of that territory in 1877. Returning to England, he practiced law for a time, and then gave his attention to authorship. His first

[1] By permission of Author and Longmans, Green & Co. (Cr. 8vo. Price 3*s*. 6*d*.)

"What's up now, sir?" said Job, doubtfully. "Bless us and save us, there's that woman again! Now surely she can't be after me, seeing that I have given her no encouragement. They give me the creeps, the whole lot of them, and that's a fact. Why, look, they have asked Mahomed to dine, too. There, that lady of mine is talking to him in as nice and civil a way as possible. Well, I'm glad it isn't me, that's all."

We looked up, and sure enough the woman in question had risen, and was escorting the wretch Mahomed from the corner, where, overcome by some acute prescience of horror, he had been seated, shivering and calling on Allah. He appeared unwilling enough to come, if for no other reason, perhaps, because it was an unaccustomed honor, for hitherto his food had been given to him apart. Anyway, I could see that he was in a state of great terror, for his tottering legs would scarcely support his stout, bulky form, and I think it was rather owing to the resources of barbarism behind him, in the shape of a huge Amahagger with a proportionately huge spear, than to the seduction of the lady who led him by the hand, that he consented to come at all.

"Well," I said to the others, "I don't at all like the look of things, but I suppose that we must face it out. Have you fellows got your revolvers on? because, if so, you had better see that they are loaded."

"I have, sir," said Job, tapping his Colt, "but Mr. Leo has only got his hunting knife, though that is big enough, surely."

Feeling that it would not do to wait while the missing weapon was fetched, we advanced boldly, and seated ourselves in a line, with our backs against the side of the cave.

As soon as we were seated, an earthenware jar was passed round containing a fermented fluid, of by no means unpleasant taste, though apt to turn upon the stomach, made of crushed grain — not Indian corn, but a small brown grain that grows upon the stem in clusters, not unlike that which in the southern part of Africa is known by the name of Kaffir corn. The vase in which this liquid was handed round was very curious, and as it more or less resembled many hundreds of others in use among the Amahagger, I may as well describe it. These vases are of a very ancient manufacture, and of all sizes. None such can have been made in the country for hundreds, or rather thousands, of years. They are found in the rock tombs, of which I shall give a description in their proper place, and my own be-

not wrong. It was a curious sort of a feast, I reflected, in appearance — indeed, an entertainment of the Barmecide stamp, for there was absolutely nothing to eat.

At last, just as I was beginning to feel as though I were being mesmerized, a move was made. Without the slightest warning, a man from the other side of the circle called out in a loud voice: —

"Where is the flesh that we shall eat?"

Thereon everybody in the circle answered in a deep measured tone, and stretching out the right arm toward the fire as they spoke: —

"The flesh will come."

"Is it a goat?" said the same man.

"It is a goat without horns, and more than a goat, and we shall slay it," they answered with one voice, and turning half round, they one and all grasped the handles of their spears with the right hand, and then simultaneously let them go.

"Is it an ox?" said the man again.

"It is an ox without horns, and more than an ox, and we shall slay it," was the answer, and again the spears were grasped, and again let go.

Then came a pause, and I noticed, with horror and a rising of the hair, that the woman next to Mahomed began to fondle him, patting his cheeks, and calling him by names of endearment, while her fierce eyes played up and down his trembling form. I don't know why the sight frightened me so, but it did frighten us all dreadfully, especially Leo. The caressing was so snakelike, and so evidently a part of some ghastly formula that had to be gone through. I saw Mahomed turn white under his brown skin, sickly white with fear.

"Is the meat ready to be cooked?" asked the voice, more rapidly.

"It is ready; it is ready."

"Is the pot hot to cook it?" it continued, in a sort of scream that echoed painfully down the great recesses of the cave.

"It is hot; it is hot."

"Great heavens!" roared Leo, "remember the writing, 'The people who put pots upon the heads of strangers.'"

As he said the words, before we could stir, or even take the matter in, two great ruffians jumped up, and seizing the long pincers, plunged them into the heart of the fire, and the woman

struck him dead with one blow of his powerful arm, sending the knife right through him. I did the same by another, but Job missed his stroke, and I saw a brawny Amahagger grip him by the middle and whirl him off the rock. The knife, not being secured by a thong, fell from his hand as he did so, and, by a most happy accident for Job, lighted upon its handle on the rock, just as the body of the Amahagger, being undermost, hit upon its point, and was transfixed upon it. What happened to Job after that I am sure I do not know, but my own impression is that he lay still upon the corpse of his deceased assailant, "playing 'possum," as the Americans say. As for myself, I was soon involved in a desperate encounter with two ruffians, who, luckily for me, had left their spears behind them; and for the first time in my life the great physical power with which Nature has endowed me stood me in good stead. I had hacked at the head of one man with my hunting knife, which was almost as big and heavy as a short sword, with such vigor that the sharp steel had split his skull down to the eyes, and was held so fast by it that as he suddenly fell sideways the knife was twisted right out of my hand.

Then it was that the two others sprang upon me. I saw them coming and got an arm round the waist of each, and down we all fell upon the floor of the cave together, rolling over and over. They were strong men, but I was mad with rage and that awful lust for slaughter which will creep into the hearts of the most civilized of us when blows are flying, and life and death tremble on the turn. My arms were round the two swarthy demons, and I hugged them till I heard their ribs crack and crunch up beneath my grip. They twisted and writhed like snakes, and clawed and battered at me with their fists, but I held on. Lying on my back there, so that their bodies should protect me from spear thrusts from above, I slowly crushed the life out of them, and as I did so, strange as it may seem, I thought of what the amiable Head of my College at Cambridge and my brother Fellows would say if by clairvoyance they could see me, of all men, playing such a bloody game. Soon my assailants grew faint, and almost ceased to struggle; their breath had left them, and they were dying, but still I dared not leave them, for they died very slowly. I knew that if I relaxed my grip, they would revive. The other ruffians probably thought — for we were all three lying in the shadow of the ledge — that we were all dead

together; at any rate they did not interfere with our little tragedy.

I turned my head, and as I lay gasping in the throes of that awful struggle I could see that Leo was off the rock now, for the lamplight fell full upon him. He was still on his feet, but in the center of a surging mass of struggling men, who were striving to pull him down as wolves pull down a stag. Up above them towered his beautiful pale face crowned with its bright curls (for Leo was six feet two high), and I saw that he was fighting with a desperate abandonment and energy that was at once splendid and hideous to behold. He drove his knife through one man — they were so close to him and mixed up with him that they could not get at him to kill him with their big spears, and they had no knives or sticks. The man fell, and then somehow the knife was wrenched from his hand, leaving him defenseless, and I thought the end had come. But no; with a desperate effort he broke loose from them, seized the body of the man he had just slain, and lifting it high in the air, hurled it right at the mob of his assailants, so that the shock and weight of it swept some five or six more of them to the earth. But in a minute they were all up again, except one, whose skull was smashed, and had once more fastened upon him. And then slowly, and with infinite labor and struggling, the wolves bore the lion down. Once even then he recovered himself, and felled an Amahagger with his fist, but it was more than man could do to hold his own for long against so many, and at last he came crashing down upon the rock, falling as an oak falls, and bearing with him to the earth all those who clung about him. They gripped him by his arms and legs, and then cleared off his body.

"A spear," cried a voice — "a spear to cut his throat, and a vessel to catch his blood."

I shut my eyes, for I saw the man coming with a spear, and myself, I could not stir to Leo's help, for I was growing weak, and the two men on me were not yet dead, and a deadly sickness came over me.

Then suddenly there was a disturbance, and involuntarily I opened my eyes again, and looked toward the scene of murder. The girl Ustane had suddenly thrown herself on the top of Leo's prostrate form, covering his body with her body, and fastening her arms about his neck. They tried to drag her from him, but she twisted her legs round his, and hung on like a bull-

dog, or rather like a creeper to a tree, and they could not. Then they tried to stab him in the side without hurting her, but somehow she shielded him, and he was only wounded.

At last they lost patience.

"Drive the spear through the man and the woman together," said a voice, the same voice that had asked the questions at that ghastly feast, "so of a verity shall they be wed."

Then I saw the man with the weapon straighten himself for the effort. I saw the cold steel gleam on high, and once more I shut my eyes.

As I did so — I heard a voice of a man thunder out in tones that rang and echoed down the rocky ways —

"*Cease!*"

Then I fainted, and as I did so it flashed through my darkening mind that I was passing down into the last oblivion of death.

II. The Temple of Truth.

Our preparations did not take us very long. We put a change of clothing apiece and some spare boots into my Gladstone bag, also we took our revolvers and an express rifle each, together with a good supply of ammunition — a precaution to which, under Providence, we subsequently owed our lives over and over again. The rest of our gear, together with our heavy rifles, we left behind us.

A few minutes before the appointed time we once more attended in Ayesha's boudoir, and found her also ready, her dark cloak thrown over her winding sheet like wrappings.

"Are ye prepared for the great venture?" she said.

"We are," I answered, "though for my part, Ayesha, I have no faith in it."

"Ah, my Holly," she said, "thou art of a truth like those old Jews — of whom the memory plagues me so sorely — unbelieving, and hard to accept that which they have not seen. But thou shalt see; for unless my mirror yonder lies" — and she pointed to the font of crystal water — "the path is yet open as it was of old time. And now let us start upon the new life which shall end — who knoweth where?"

"Ah," I echoed, "who knoweth where?" and we passed down into the central cave, and out into the light of day. At the mouth of the cave we found a single litter with six bearers, all of them mutes, waiting, and with them I was relieved to

see our old friend, Billali, for whom I had conceived a sort of affection. It appeared that, for reasons not necessary to explain at length, Ayesha had thought it best that, with the exception of herself, we should proceed on foot, and this we were nothing loath to do, after our long confinement in caves, which, however suitable they might be for sarcophagi — a singularly inappropriate word, by the way, for those particular tombs, which certainly did not consume the bodies given to their keeping — were depressing habitations for breathing mortals like ourselves. Either by accident, or by the orders of She, the space in front of the cave where we had beheld that awful dance was perfectly clear of spectators. Not a soul was to be seen, and consequently I do not believe that our departure was known to anybody except perhaps the mutes who waited on She, and they were, of course, in the habit of holding their tongues as to what they saw.

In a few minutes we were stepping out sharply across the great cultivated plain or lake bed framed like a vast emerald in its setting of frowning cliff, and had another opportunity of wondering at the extraordinary nature of the site chosen by these old people of Kôr for their capital, and at the marvelous amount of labor, ingenuity, and engineering skill that must have been brought into requisition by the founders of the city to drain so huge a sheet of water, and to keep it clear of subsequent accumulations. It is, indeed, so far as my experience goes, an unequaled instance of what man can do in the face of nature, for in my opinion such achievements as the Suez Canal or even the Mont Cenis tunnel do not approach this ancient undertaking in magnitude.

When we had been walking for half an hour, enjoying ourselves exceedingly in the delightful cool which about this time of the day always appeared to descend upon the great plain of Kôr, and in some degree atoned for the want of any land or sea breeze, for all wind was kept off by the rocky mountain wall, we began to get a clear view of what Billali had informed us were the ruins of a great city. And even from that distance we could see how wonderful those ruins were, a fact that with every step we took became more evident. The city was not very large if compared to Babylon or Thebes, or other cities of remote antiquity; perhaps its outer wall contained some twelve square miles of ground, or a little more. Nor had the walls, so far as we could judge when we reached them, been

very high, probably not more than forty feet, which was about their present height where they had not, through the sinking of the ground or some such cause, fallen into ruin. The reason of this, no doubt, was that the people of Kôr, being protected from any outside attack by far more tremendous ramparts than any that the hand of man could rear, only required them for show, and to guard against civil discord. But on the other hand they were as broad as they were high, built entirely of dressed stone, hewn, no doubt, from the vast caves, and surrounded by a great moat about sixty feet in width, some portions of which were still filled with water. About ten minutes before the sun finally sank we reached this moat, and passed down and through it, clambering across what evidently were the piled-up fragments of a great bridge in order to do so, and then with some little difficulty up the slope of the wall to its summit. I wish that it lay within the power of my pen to give some idea of the grandeur of the sight that then met our view. There, all bathed in the red glow of the sinking sun, were miles upon miles of ruins — columns, temples, shrines, and the palaces of kings, varied with patches of green bush. Of course the roofs of these buildings had long since fallen into decay and vanished, but owing to the extreme massiveness of the style of building, and to the hardness and durability of the rock employed, most of the party walls and great columns still remained standing.

Presently we came to an enormous pile, which we rightly took to be a temple, covering at least four acres of ground, apparently arranged in a series of courts, each one inclosing another of smaller size, on the principle of a Chinese nest of boxes, and separated one from the other by rows of huge columns. And whilst I think of it I may as well state a remarkable thing about the shape of these columns, which resembled none that I have ever seen or heard of, being made with a kind of waist in the center, and swelling out above and below. At first we thought that the shape was meant to roughly symbolize or suggest the female form, as was a common habit amongst the ancient religious architects of all creeds. On the following day, however, as we went up the slopes of the mountain, we discovered a large quantity of the most stately-looking palms, of which the trunks grew exactly in this shape, and I have now no doubt that the first designer of those columns drew his inspiration from the graceful bends of those very palms, or rather their

ancestors, which then, some eight or ten thousand years ago as now, beautified the slopes of the mountain that had once formed the shores of the volcanic lake.

At the *façade* of this huge temple, which, I should imagine, is almost as large as that of El-Karnac at Luxor, some of the largest columns, which I measured, being between eighteen and twenty feet in diameter at the base, by some sixty feet in height, our little procession was halted, and Ayesha descended from her litter.

"There used to be a spot here, Kallikrates," she said to Leo, who had run up to lift her down, "where one might sleep. Two thousand years ago did thou and I and that Egyptian snake rest therein, but since then have I not set foot here, nor any man, and perchance it has fallen;" and, followed by the rest of us, she passed up a vast flight of broken and ruined steps into the outer court, and looked round into the gloom. Presently she seemed to recollect, and, walking a few paces along the wall to the left, halted.

"It is here," she said, and at the same time beckoned to the two mutes who were loaded with provisions and our little belongings, to advance. One of them came forward, and soon produced a lamp and lit it from his brasier, for the Amahagger when on a journey nearly always carried with them a little lighted brasier, from which to provide fire. The tinder of this brasier was made of broken fragments of mummy carefully damped, and if the admixture of moisture was properly managed, this unholy compound would smolder away for hours. As soon as the lamp was lit, we entered the place before which Ayesha had stopped. It turned out to be a chamber hollowed in the thickness of the wall, and, from the fact of there still being a massive stone table in it, I should think that it had probably served as a living room, perhaps for one of the doorkeepers of the great temple.

Here we stopped, and after cleaning the place out and making it as comfortable as circumstances and the darkness would permit, we ate some cold meat, at least Leo, Job, and I did, for Ayesha, as I think I have said elsewhere, never touched anything except fruit and water. Whilst we were eating, the moon, which was at her full, rose above the mountain wall and began to flood the place with silver.

"Wot ye why I have brought ye here to-night, my Holly?" said Ayesha, leaning her head upon her hand and watching the

great orb as she rose, like some heavenly queen, above the solemn pillars of the temple. "I brought ye — nay, it is strange, but knowest thou, Kallikrates, that thou liest at this moment upon the very spot where thy dead body lay when I bore thee back to those caves of Kôr so many years ago? It all returns to my mind now. I can see it, and horrible is it to my sight," and she shuddered.

Here Leo jumped up, and hastily changed his seat. However the reminiscence might affect Ayesha, it clearly had few charms for him.

"I brought ye," went on Ayesha, presently, "that ye might look upon the most wonderful sight that ever the eye of man beheld — the full moon shining over ruined Kôr. When ye have done your eating — I would that I could teach thee to eat naught but fruit, Kallikrates, but that will come after thou hast laved in the fire; once I too ate flesh like a brute beast — when ye have done we will go out, and I will show you this great temple, and the God that men once worshiped therein."

Of course we got up at once and started. And here again my pen fails me. To give a string of measurements and details of the various courts of the temple would only be wearisome, supposing that I had them, and yet I know not how I am to describe what we saw, magnificent as it was even in its ruin, almost beyond the power of realization. Court upon dim court, row upon row of mighty pillars — some of them (especially at the gateways) sculptured from pedestal to capital — space upon space of empty chambers that spoke more eloquently to the imagination than any crowded streets. And over all, the dead silence of the dead, the sense of utter loneliness, and the brooding spirit of the Past! How beautiful it was, and yet how drear! We did not dare to speak aloud. Ayesha herself was awed in the presence of an antiquity compared to which even her length of days was but a little thing; we only whispered, and our whispers seemed to run from column to column till they were lost in the quiet air. Bright fell the moonlight on pillar and court and shattered wall, hiding all their rents and imperfections in its silver garment, and clothing their hoar majesty with the peculiar glory of the night. It was a wonderful sight to see the full moon looking down on the ruined fane of Kôr. It was a wonderful thing to think for how many thousands of years the dead orb above and the dead city below had gazed thus upon each other, and in the utter solitude of

space poured forth each to each the tale of their lost life and long-departed glory. The weird light fell, and minute by minute the quiet shadows crept across the grass-grown courts like the spirits of old priests haunting the habitations of their worship—the weird light fell, and the long shadows grew till the beauty and grandeur of the scene and the untamed majesty of its present Death seemed to sink into our very souls, and speak more loudly than the tongues of trumpets concerning the pomp and splendor that the grave had swallowed and even memory had forgotten.

"Come," said Ayesha, after we had gazed and gazed, I know not for how long, "and I will show you the stony flower of Loveliness and Wonder's very crown, if yet it stands to mock time with its beauty and fill the heart of man with longing for that which is behind the veil;" and, without waiting for an answer, she led us through two more pillared courts into the inner shrine of the old fane.

And there, in the center of the inmost court, that might have been some fifty yards square, or a little more, we stood face to face with what is perhaps the grandest allegorical work of Art that the genius of her children has ever given to the world. For in the exact center of the court, placed upon a thick square slab of rock, was a huge round ball of dark stone, some forty feet in diameter, and standing on the ball was a colossal winged figure of a beauty so entrancing and divine that when I first gazed upon it, illumined and shadowed as it was by the soft light of the moon, my breath stood still, and for an instant my heart ceased its beating.

III. Walking the Plank.

Next day the mutes awoke us before the dawn; and by the time that we had got the sleep out of our eyes, and gone through a very perfunctory wash at a spring which still welled up into the remains of a marble basin in the center of the north quadrangle of the vast outer court, we found She standing by the latter, ready to start, while old Billali and the two bearer mutes were busy collecting the baggage. As usual, Ayesha was veiled like the marble Truth (by the way, I wonder if she originally got the idea of covering up her beauty from that statue?). I noticed, however, that she seemed very depressed, and had

none of that proud and buoyant bearing which would have betrayed her among a thousand women of the same stature, even if they had been veiled like herself. She looked up as we came —for her head was bowed—and greeted us. Leo asked her how she had slept.

"Ill, my Kallikrates," she answered—"ill. This night have strange and hideous dreams come creeping through my brain, and I know not what they portend. Almost do I feel as though some evil overshadowed me; and yet how can evil touch me? I wonder," she went on, with a sudden outbreak of womanly tenderness—"I wonder if, should aught happen to me, so that I slept and left thee waking, wouldst thou think gently of me? I wonder, my Kallikrates, if thou wouldst tarry till I came again, as for so many centuries I have tarried for thy coming?" Then, without waiting for an answer, she went on: "Come, let us be setting forth, for we have far to go, and before another day is born in yonder blue should we stand in the place of Life."

In five minutes more we were once more on our way through the vast ruined city, that loomed at us on either side in the gray dawning in a way that was at once grand and oppressive. Just as the first ray of the rising sun shot like a golden arrow athwart this storied desolation, we gained the further gateway of the outer wall, and having given one more glance at the hoar and pillared majesty through which we had passed, and (with the exception of Job, for whom ruins had no charms) breathed a sigh of regret that we had not had more time to explore it, passed through the great moat, and on to the plain beyond.

As the sun rose so did Ayesha's spirits, till by breakfast time they had regained their normal level, and she laughingly set down her previous depression to the associations of the spot where she had slept.

"These barbarians declare that Kôr is haunted," she said, "and of a truth I do believe their saying, for never did I know so ill a night, save once. I remember it now. It was on that very spot when thou didst lie dead at my feet, Kallikrates. Never will I visit it again; it is a place of evil omen."

After a very brief halt for breakfast we pressed on with such good will that by two o'clock in the afternoon we were at the foot of the vast wall of rock that formed the lip of the volcano, and which at this point towered up precipitously

above us for fifteen hundred or two thousand feet. Here we halted, certainly not to my astonishment, for I did not see how it was possible that we should go any further.

"Now," said Ayesha, as she descended from her litter, "doth our labor but commence, for here do we part with these men, and henceforward must we bear ourselves;" and then, addressing Billali, "Do thou and these slaves remain here, and abide our coming. By to-morrow at the midday we shall be with thee; if not, wait."

Billali bowed humbly, and said that her august bidding should be obeyed if they stopped there till they grew old.

"And this man, O Holly!" said She, pointing to Job, "best is it that he should tarry also, for if his heart be not high and his courage great, perchance some evil might overtake him. Also, the secrets of the place whither we go are not fit for common eyes."

I translated this to Job, who instantly and earnestly entreated me, almost with tears in his eyes, not to leave him behind. He said that he was sure that he could see nothing worse than he had already seen, and that he was terrified to death at the idea of being left alone with those "dumb folk," who, he thought, would probably take the opportunity to hot-pot him.

I translated what he said to Ayesha, who shrugged her shoulders and answered, "Well, let him come, it is naught to me; on his own head be it, and he will serve to bear the lamp and this," and she pointed to a narrow plank, some sixteen feet long, which had been bound above the long bearing pole of her hammock, as I had thought to make the curtains spread out better, but, as it now appeared, for some unknown purpose connected with our extraordinary undertaking.

Accordingly, the plank, which, though tough, was very light, was given to Job to carry, and also one of the lamps. I slung the other on to my back, together with a spare jar of oil, while Leo loaded himself with the provisions and some water in a kid's skin. When this was done, She made Billali and the six bearer mutes to retreat behind a grove of flowering magnolias about a hundred yards away, and remain there under the pain of death till we had vanished. They bowed humbly and went, and, as he departed, old Billali gave me a friendly shake of the hand, and whispered that he had rather that it was I than he who was going on this wonderful expedition with "She-

who-must-be-obeyed," and upon my word I felt inclined to agree with him. In another minute they were gone, and then, having briefly asked us if we were ready, Ayesha turned, and gazed up the towering cliff.

"Goodness me, Leo," I said, "surely we are not going to climb that!"

Leo shrugged his shoulders, being in a condition of half-fascinated, half-expectant mystification, and, as he did so, Ayesha, with a sudden move, began to climb the cliff, and of course we had to follow her. It was perfectly marvelous to see the ease and grace with which she sprang from rock to rock, and swung herself along the ledges. The ascent was not, however, so difficult as it looked, although there were one or two nasty places where it did not do to look behind you, the fact being that the rock still sloped here, and was not absolutely precipitous as it was higher up. In this way we, with no great labor, mounted to a height of some fifty feet above our last standing place, the only really troublesome thing to manage being Job's board, and in doing so drew some fifty or sixty paces to the left of our starting point, for we went up like a crab, sideways. Presently we reached a ledge, narrow enough at first, but which widened as we followed it, and what is more, sloped inward like the petal of a flower, so that as we followed it we gradually got into a kind of rut or fold of rock that grew deeper and deeper, till at last it resembled a Devonshire lane in stone, and hid us perfectly from the gaze of anybody on the slope below, if there had been anybody to gaze. This lane (which appeared to be a natural formation) continued for some fifty or sixty paces, and then suddenly ended in a cave, also natural, running at right angles to it. I am sure that it was a natural cave, and not hollowed by the hand of man, because of its irregular and contorted shape and course, which gave it the appearance of having been blown bodily in the mountain by some frightful eruption of gas following the line of the least resistance. All the caves hollowed by the ancients of Kôr, on the contrary, were cut out with the most perfect regularity and symmetry. At the mouth of this cave Ayesha halted, and bade us light the two lamps, which I did, giving one to her and keeping the other myself. Then, taking the lead, she advanced down the cavern, picking her way with great care, as, indeed, it was necessary to do, for the floor was most irregular—strewn with bowlders like the bed of a stream, and in

some places pitted with deep holes, in which it would have been easy to break one's leg.

This cavern we pursued for twenty minutes or more, it being, so far as I could form a judgment, — owing to its numerous twists and turns, no easy task, — about a quarter of a mile long.

At last, however, we halted at its further end, and whilst I was still trying to pierce the gloom a great gust of air came tearing down it, and extinguished both the lamps.

Ayesha called to us, and we crept up to her, for she was a little in front, and were rewarded with a view that was positively appalling in its gloom and grandeur. Before us was a mighty chasm in the black rock, jagged and torn and splintered through it in a far past age by some awful convulsion of Nature, as though it had been cleft by stroke upon stroke of the lightning. This chasm, which was bounded by a precipice on the hither, and presumably, though we could not see it, on the further side also, may have measured any width across, but from its darkness I do not think that it can have been very broad. It was impossible to make out much of its outline, or how far it ran, for the simple reason that the point where we were standing was so far from the upper surface of the cliff, at least fifteen hundred or two thousand feet, that only a very dim light struggled down to us from above. The mouth of the cavern gave on to a most curious and tremendous spur of rock, which jutted out in the gulf before us in mid-air for a distance of some fifty yards, coming to a sharp point at its termination, and resembling nothing that I can think of so much as the spur upon the leg of a cock in shape. This huge spur was attached only to the parent precipice at its base, which was, of course, enormous, just as the cock's spur is attached to its leg. Otherwise it was utterly unsupported.

"Here must we pass," said Ayesha. "Be careful lest giddiness overcome ye, or the wind sweep ye into the gulf beneath, for of a truth it hath no bottom;" and, without giving us any further time to get scared, she started walking along the spur, leaving us to follow her as best we might. I was next to her, then came Job, painfully dragging his plank, while Leo brought up the rear. It was a wonderful sight to see this intrepid woman gliding fearlessly along that dreadful place. For my part, when I had gone but a very few yards, what between the pressure of the air and the awful sense of the consequences that

a slip would entail, I found it necessary to go down on my hands and knees and crawl, and so did the other two.

But She never condescended to this. On she went, leaning her body against the gusts of wind, and never seeming to lose her head or her balance.

In a few minutes we had crossed some twenty paces of this awful bridge, which got narrower at every step, and then all of a sudden a great gust came tearing along the gorge. I saw Ayesha lean herself against it, but the strong draught got under her dark cloak, and tore it from her, and away it went down the wind, flapping like a dying bird. It was dreadful to see it go, till it was lost in the blackness. I clung to the saddle of rock, and looked round, while the great spur vibrated with a humming sound beneath us, like a living thing. The sight was a truly awesome one. There we were poised in the gloom, between heaven and earth. Beneath us were hundreds upon hundreds of feet of emptiness that gradually grew darker and darker, till at last it was absolutely black, and at what depth it ended is more than I can guess. Above were space upon space of giddy air, and far, far away a line of blue sky. And down this vast gulf upon which we were pinnacled the great draught dashed and roared, driving clouds and misty wreaths of vapor before it, till we were half blinded and utterly confused.

The whole position was so tremendous and so absolutely unearthly, that I believe it actually lulled our sense of terror, but to this hour I often see it in my dreams, and wake up covered with cold perspiration at its mere fantasy.

"On! on!" cried the white form before us, for now the cloak had gone. She was robed in white, and looked more like a spirit riding down the gale than a woman; "on, or ye will fall and be dashed to pieces. Keep your eyes fixed upon the ground and closely hug the rock."

We obeyed her, and crept painfully along the quivering path, against which the wind shrieked and wailed as it shook it, causing it to murmur like a vast tuning fork. On we went, I do not know for how long, only gazing round now and again, when it was absolutely necessary, until at last we saw that we were on the very tip of the spur, a slab of rock little larger than an ordinary table, and that throbbed and jumped like any overengined steamer. There we lay on our stomachs, clinging to the ground, and looked about, while Ayesha stood leaning out against the wind, down which her long hair streamed, and,

absolutely heedless of the hideous depth that yawned beneath, pointed before her. Then we saw why the narrow plank, which Job and I had painfully dragged along between us, had been provided. Before us was an empty space, on the other side of which was something, as yet we could not see what, for here — either owing to the shadow of the opposite cliff, or from some other cause — the gloom was that of night.

"We must wait awhile," called Ayesha; "soon there will be light."

At the moment I could not imagine what she meant. How could more light than there was ever come to this dreadful spot? Whilst I was still debating in my mind, suddenly, like a great sword of flame, a beam from the setting sun pierced the Stygian gloom, and smote upon the point of rock whereon we lay, illuminating Ayesha's lovely form with an unearthly splendor. I only wish that I could describe the wild and marvelous beauty of that sword of fire, laid across the darkness and rushing mist-wreaths of the gulf. How it got there I do not to this moment know, but I presume there was some cleft or hole in the opposing cliff through which it pierced when the setting orb was in a direct line with it. All I can say is that the effect was the most wonderful that I ever saw. Right through the heart of the darkness that flaming sword was stabbed, and where it lay there was the most surpassingly vivid light, so vivid that even at a distance one could see the grain of the rock, while, outside of it, yes, within a few inches of its keen edge — there was naught but clustering shadows.

And now, by this ray of light, for which She had been waiting, and timed our arrival to meet, knowing that at this season, for thousands of years, it had always struck thus at sunset, we saw what lay before us. Within eleven or twelve feet of the very tip of the tonguelike rock whereon we lay there arose, presumably from the far bottom of the gulf, a sugar-loaf-shaped cone, of which the summit was exactly opposite to us. But had there been a summit only it would not have helped us much, for the nearest point of its circumference was some forty feet from where we were. On the lip of this summit, however, which was circular and hollow, rested a tremendous flat stone, something like a glacier stone — indeed, perhaps it was one for all I know to the contrary — and the end of this stone approached to within twelve feet or so of us. This huge bowlder was nothing more or less than a gigantic rock-

ing stone accurately balanced upon the edge of the cone or miniature crater, like a half-crown on the rim of a wine glass; for in the fierce light that played upon it and us we could see it oscillating in the gusts of wind.

"Quick!" said Ayesha; "the plank — we must cross while the light endures; presently it will be gone."

"Oh, Lord, sir!" groaned Job, "surely she don't mean us to walk across that there place on that there thing," as in obedience to my direction he pushed the long board toward me.

"That's it, Job," I hallooed in ghastly merriment, though the idea of the plank was no pleasanter to me than to him.

I pushed the plank on to Ayesha, who deftly ran it across the gulf so that one end of it rested on the rocking stone, the other remaining on the extremity of our trembling spur. Then placing her foot upon it to prevent it from being blown away, she turned to me.

"Since last I was here, O Holly!" she called, "the support of the moving stone hath lessened somewhat, so that I am not sure if it will bear our weight and fall or no. Therefore will I cross the first, because no harm will come unto me;" and, without further ado, she trod lightly but firmly across the frail bridge, and in another second was standing safe upon the heaving stone.

"It is safe," she called. "See, hold thou the plank! I will stand on the further side of the stone so that it may not overbalance with your greater weights. Now come, O Holly! for presently the light will fail us."

I struggled to my knees, and if ever I felt sick in my life, I felt sick then, and I am not ashamed to say that I hesitated and hung back.

"Surely thou art not afraid," called this strange creature in a lull of the gale, from where she stood poised like a bird, on the highest point of the rocking stone. "Make then way for Kallikrates."

This settled me; it is better to fall down a precipice and die than be laughed at by such a woman; so I clinched my teeth, and in another instant I was on that horrible, narrow, bending plank, with bottomless space beneath and around me. I have always hated a great height, but never before did I realize the full horrors of which such a position is capable. Oh, the sickening sensation of that yielding board resting on the two moving supports! I grew dizzy, and thought that I

must fall; my spine *crept;* it seemed to me that I was falling, and my delight at finding myself sprawling upon that stone, which rose and fell beneath me like a boat in a swell, cannot be expressed in words. All I know is that briefly, but earnestly enough, I thanked Providence for preserving me so far.

Then came Leo's turn, and, though he looked rather queer, he came across like a rope dancer. Ayesha stretched out her hand to clasp his own, and I heard her murmur, "Bravely done, my love — bravely done! The old Greek spirit lives in thee yet!"

And now only poor Job remained on the further side of the gulf. He crept up to the plank, and yelled out, "I can't do it, sir. I shall fall into that beastly place."

"You must," I said — "you must; Job, it's as easy as catching flies." I suppose that I said this to satisfy my conscience — because expression conveys a wonderful idea of facility — as a matter of fact I know no more difficult operation in the whole world than catching flies — that is, in warm weather, when they have all their faculties — unless, indeed, it is catching mosquitoes.

"I can't, sir — I can't, indeed."

"Let the man come, or let him stop and perish there. See, the light is dying! In a minute it will be gone!" said Ayesha.

I looked. She was right. The sun was passing below the level of the hole or cleft in the precipice through which the ray came.

"If you stop there, Job, you will die alone," I hallooed; "the light is going."

"Come, be a man, Job," roared Leo; "it's quite easy."

Thus adjured, the miserable Job, with, I think, the most awful yell that I ever heard, precipitated himself face downward on the plank — he did not dare, small blame to him, to try to walk it, and commenced to draw himself across in little jerks, his poor legs hanging down on either side into the nothingness beneath.

His violent jerks at the frail board made the great stone, which was only balanced on a few inches of rock, oscillate in a most sickening manner; and, to make matters worse, just as he was halfway across, the flying ray of lurid light suddenly went out just as though a lamp had been extinguished in a curtained room, leaving the whole howling wilderness of air in blackness.

"Come on, Job, for God's sake," I shouted, in an agony of fear, while the stone, gathering motion with every swing, rocked so violently that it was difficult to hang on to it. It was a truly awful position.

"Lord have mercy on me!" hallooed poor Job from the darkness. "Oh, the plank's slipping!" and I heard a violent struggle, and thought that he was gone.

But just at that moment his outstretched hand, clasping in agony at the air, met my own, and I hauled—ah, how I did haul, putting out all the strength that it has pleased Providence to give me in such abundance—and to my joy in another minute Job was gasping on the rock beside me. But the plank! I felt it slip, and heard it knock against a projecting knob of rock, and it was gone.

"Great heavens!" I exclaimed. "How are we going to get back?"

"I don't know," answered Leo, out of the gloom. "'Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.' I am thankful enough to be here."

But Ayesha merely called to me to take her hand and creep after her.

IV. The Spirit of Life.

I did as I was bid, and in fear and trembling felt myself drawn over the edge of the stone. I sprawled my legs out, but could touch nothing.

"I am going to fall!" I gasped.

"Nay, let thyself go and trust to me," answered Ayesha.

Now if the position is considered, it will be easily understood that this was a greater demand upon my confidence than was justified by my knowledge of Ayesha's character. For all I knew she might be in the very act of consigning me to a horrible doom. But in life we sometimes have to lay our faith upon strange altars, and so it was now.

"Let thyself go!" she cried, and, having no choice, I did.

I felt myself slide a pace or two down the sloping surface of the rock, and then pass into the air, and the thought flashed through my brain that I was lost. But no. In another instant my feet struck against a rocky floor, and I felt that I was standing on something solid, and out of reach of the wind, which I

could hear singing away overhead. As I stood there thanking my stars for these small mercies, there was a slip and a scuffle, and down came Leo alongside of me.

"Halloo, old fellow!" he called out, "are you there? This is getting interesting, is it not?"

Just then, with a terrific yell, Job arrived right on the top of us, knocking us both down. By the time that we had struggled to our feet again, Ayesha was standing among us and bidding us light the lamps, which fortunately remained uninjured, as did the spare jar of oil.

I got out my box of Bryant and May's wax matches, and they struck as merrily there in that awful place as in a London drawing-room.

In a couple of minutes both the lamps were alight, and a curious scene they revealed. We were huddled up in a rocky chamber, some twelve feet square, and scared enough we looked; that is, except Ayesha, who was standing calmly with her arms folded, and waiting for the lamps to burn up. The chamber appeared to be partly natural and partly hollowed out of the top of the cone. The roof of the natural part was formed of the swinging stone, and that of the back part of the chamber, which sloped downward, was hewn from the live rock. For the rest, the place was warm and dry — a perfect haven of rest compared to the giddy pinnacle above, and the quivering spur that shot out to meet it in mid-air.

"There," said She, "safely have we come, though once I feared that the rocking stone would fall with ye, and precipitate ye into the bottomless deeps beneath, for I do believe that the cleft goeth down to the very womb of the world. The rock whereon the stone resteth hath crumbled beneath the swinging weight. And now that he," nodding toward Job, who was sitting on the floor, feebly wiping his forehead with a red cotton pocket handkerchief, "whom they rightly call the 'Pig,' for as a pig is he stupid, hath let fall the plank, it will not be easy to return across the gulf, and to that end must I make a plan. But now rest awhile, and look at this place. What think ye that it is?"

"We know not," I answered.

"Wouldst thou believe that once a man did choose this airy nest for a daily habitation, and did here endure for many years, leaving it only but one day in every ten to seek food and water and oil that the people brought, more than he could carry, and

laid as an offering in the mouth of the tunnel through which we passed hither?"

We looked up wonderingly, and she continued: —

"Yet so it was. There was a man — Noot. he named himself — who, though he lived in the latter days, had of the wisdom of the sons of Kôr. A hermit was he, and a philosopher, skilled in the secrets of Nature, and he it was who discovered the Fire that I shall show ye, which is Nature's blood and life, and also that he who bathed therein and breathed thereof should live while Nature lives. But like unto thee, O Holly, this man, Noot, would not turn his knowledge to account. 'Ill,' he said, 'was it for man to live, for man was born to die.' Therefore did he tell his secret to none, and therefore did he come and live here, where the seeker after Life must pass, and was revered of the Amahagger of the day as holy, and a hermit. And when first I came to this country — knowest thou how I came, Kallikrates? Another time will I tell thee — it is a strange tale — I heard of this philosopher, and waited for him when he came to fetch his food, and returned with him hither, though greatly did I fear to tread the gulf. Then did I beguile him with my beauty and my wit, and flatter him with my tongue, so that he led me down and showed me the Fire, and told me the secrets of the Fire, but he would not suffer me to step therein; and, fearing lest he should slay me, I refrained, knowing that the man was very old, and soon would die. And I returned, having learned from him all that he knew of the wonderful Spirit of the World, and that was much, for the man was wise and very ancient, and by purity and abstinence, and the contemplations of his innocent mind, had worn thin the veil between that which we see and the great invisible truths, the whisper of whose wings at times we hear as they sweep through the gross air of the world. Then it was but a very few days after I met thee, my Kallikrates, who had wandered hither with the Egyptian Amenartas, and I learned to love for the first and last time, once and forever, so that it entered into my mind to come hither with thee, and receive the gift of Life for thee and me. Therefore came we, with that Egyptian who would not be left behind, and, behold, we found the old man Noot lying but newly dead. There he lay, and his white beard lay on him like a garment," and she pointed to a spot near where I was sitting; "but surely he hath long since crumbled into dust, and the wind hath borne his ashes hence."

Here I put out my hand and felt in the dust, and presently my fingers touched something. It was a single human tooth, very yellow, but sound. I held it up and showed it to Ayesha, who laughed.

"Yes," she said, "it is his without a doubt. Behold what remaineth of Noot and the wisdom of Noot — one little tooth. And yet that man had all life at his command, and for his conscience' sake would have none of it. Well, he lay there newly dead, and we descended whither I shall lead ye, and then, gathering up all my courage, and courting death that I might perchance win so glorious a crown of life, I stepped into the flames, and behold! life such as ye can never know until ye feel it also flowed into me, and I came forth undying, and lovely beyond imagining. Then did I stretch out mine arms to thee, Kallikrates, and bid thee take thine immortal bride; and behold, as I spoke, thou, blinded by my beauty, didst turn from me, and throw thine arms about the neck of Amenartas. And then a great fury filled me, and made me mad, and I seized the javelin that thou didst bear, and stabbed thee, so that there, at my very feet, in the place of Life, thou didst groan and go down into death. I knew not then that I had power to slay with mine eyes and will, therefore in my madness slew I with the javelin.

"And when thou wast dead, ah! I wept, because I was undying and thou wast dead. I wept there in the place of Life so that had I been mortal any more my heart had surely broken. And she, the swart Egyptian — she cursed me by her gods. By Osiris did she curse me and by Isis, by Nephthys and by Hekt, by Sekhet, the lioness-headed, and by Set, calling down evil on me, evil and everlasting desolation. Ah! I can see her dark face now lowering o'er me like a storm, but she could not hurt me, and I — I know not if I could hurt her. I did not try; it was naught to me then; so between us we bore thee hence. And afterward I sent her — the Egyptian — away through the swamps, and it seems that she lived to bear a son and to write the tale that should lead thee, her husband, back to me, her rival and thy murderess.

"Such is the tale, my love, and now is the hour at hand that shall set a crown upon it. Like all things on the earth, it is compounded of evil and of good — more of evil than of good, perchance — and writ in letters of blood. It is the truth; naught have I hidden from thee, Kallikrates. And now one

thing before the final moment of thy trial. We go down into the presence of Death, for Life and Death are very near together, and — who knows? that might happen which should separate us for another space of waiting. I am but a woman, and no prophetess, and I cannot read the future. But this I know — for I learned it from the lips of the wise man Noot — that my life is but prolonged and made more bright. It cannot live for aye. Therefore before we go, tell me, O Kallikrates, that of a truth thou dost forgive me, and dost love me from thy heart. See, Kallikrates; much evil have I done — perchance it was evil but two nights gone to strike that girl who loved thee cold in death — but she disobeyed me and angered me, prophesying misfortune to me, and I smote. Be careful when power comes to thee also lest thou also shouldst smite in thine anger or thy jealousy, for inconquerable strength is a sore weapon in the hands of erring man. Yes, I have sinned — out of the bitterness born of a great love have I sinned — but yet do I know the good from the evil, nor is my heart altogether hardened. Thy love, O Kallikrates, shall be the gate of my redemption, even as aforetime my passion was the path down which I ran to evil. For deep love unsatisfied is the hell of noble hearts and a portion for the accursed, but love that is mirrored back more perfect from the soul of our desires doth fashion wings to lift us above ourselves, and make us what we might be. Therefore, Kallikrates, take me by the hand, and lift my veil with no more fear than though I were some peasant girl, and not the wisest and most beauteous woman in this world, and look me in the eyes, and tell me that thou dost forgive me with all thine heart, and that with all thine heart thou dost worship me."

She paused, and the strange tenderness in her voice seemed to hover round us like a memory. I know that the sound of it moved me more even than her words, it was so very human — so very womanly. Leo, too, was strangely touched. Hitherto he had been fascinated against his better judgment, something as a bird is fascinated by a snake, but now I think that all this passed away, and he realized that he really loved this strange and glorious creature, as, alas! I loved her also. At any rate, I saw his eyes fill with tears, and he stepped swiftly to her and undid the gauzy veil, and then took her by the hand, and, gazing into her deep eyes, said aloud: —

"Ayesha, I love thee with all my heart, and so far as for-

giveness is possible, I forgive thee the death of Ustane. For the rest, it is between thee and thy Maker; I know naught of it. I only know that I love thee as I never loved before, and that I will cleave to thee to the end."

"Now," answered Ayesha, with proud humility—"now when my lord doth speak thus royally and give with so free a hand, it cannot become me to lag behind in words and be beggared of my generosity. Behold!" and she took his hand and placed it upon her shapely head, and then bent herself slowly down till one knee for an instant touched the ground—"behold, in token of submission do I bow me to my lord. Behold," and she kissed him on the lips, "in token of my wifely love do I kiss my lord. Behold," and she laid her hand upon his heart, "by the sin I sinned, by my lonely centuries of waiting wherewith it was wiped out, by the great love wherewith I love, and by the Spirit—the Eternal Thing that doth beget all life, from whom it ebbs, to whom it doth return—I swear.

"I swear, even in this first most holy hour of completed Womanhood, I swear that I will abandon Evil and cherish Good. I swear that I will be ever guided by thy voice in the straightest path of Duty. I swear that I will eschew Ambition, and through all my length of endless days set Wisdom over me as a guiding star to lead me unto truth and a knowledge of the Right. I swear also that I will honor and will cherish thee, Kallikrates, who hath been swept by the wave of time back into my arms, ay, till the very end, come it soon or late. I swear—nay, I will swear no more, for what are words? Yet shalt thou learn that Ayesha hath no false tongue. So I have sworn, and thou, my Holly, art witness to my oath. Here, too, are we wed, my husband—wed till the end of all things; here do we write our marriage vows upon the rushing winds which shall bear them up to heaven, and round and continually round the rolling world, with the gloom for bridal canopy.

"And for a bridal gift to thee my beauty's starry crown, and enduring life and wisdom without measure, and wealth that none can count. Behold! the great ones of the earth shall creep about thy feet, and their fair women shall cover up their eyes because of the shining glory of thy face, and their wise ones shall be abased before thee. Thou shalt read the hearts of men as an open writing, and hither and thither shalt thou lead them as thy pleasure listeth. Like that old Sphinx of Egypt shalt thou sit aloft from age to age, and ever shall

they cry to thee to solve the riddle of thy greatness that doth not pass away, and ever shalt thou mock them with thy silence.

"Behold! once more I kiss thee, and by that kiss I give thee dominion over sea and earth, over the peasant in his hovel, over the monarch in his palace halls, and cities crowned with towers, and those who *breathe therein*. Where'er the sun shakes out his spears, where'er the lonesome waters mirror up the moon, where'er storms roll, and Heaven's painted bows arch in the sky—from the pure North shrouded in her snows, across the middle spaces of the world, to where the amorous South, lying like a bride upon her azure seas, breathes in sighs made sweet with myrtle bloom—there shall thy power pass, and thy dominion find a home. Nor sickness, nor icy finger fear, nor sorrow and pale waste of form and mind hovering ever o'er humanity shall so much as shadow thee with the shadow of their wings. As a God shalt thou be, holding good and evil in the hollow of thy hand, and I, even I, I humble myself before thee. Such is the power of Love, and such is the bridal gift I give unto thee, Kallikrates, royal son of Ra, my Lord and Lord of All.

"And now it is done—and come storm, come shine, come good, come evil, come life, come death, it never, never can be undone. For of a truth, that which is, is, and being done, is done for aye, and cannot be altered. I have said.—Let us hence, that all things may be accomplished in their order;" and, taking one of the lamps, she advanced toward the end of the chamber that was roofed in by the swaying stone, where she halted.

We followed her, and perceived that in the wall of the cone there was a stair, or, to be more accurate, that some projecting knobs of rock had been so shaped as to form a good imitation of a stair. Down this Ayesha began to climb, springing from step to step like a chamois, and after her we followed with less grace. When we had descended some fifteen or sixteen steps, we found that they ended in a tremendous rocky slope, running first outward and then inward, like the slope of an inverted cone or tunnel. The slope was very steep, and often precipitous, but it was nowhere impassable, and by the light of the lamps we went down it with no great difficulty, though it was gloomy work enough traveling on thus, no one of us knew whither, in the dead heart of a volcano. As we went, however, I took the precaution of noting our route as well as I could; and this

was not difficult, owing to the extraordinary and most fantastic shape of the rocks that were strewn about, many of which in that dim light looked more like the grim faces carven upon mediæval gargoyles than ordinary bowlders.

For a long period we traveled on thus, half an hour, I should say, till, after we had descended for many hundreds of feet, I perceived that we were reaching the point of the inverted cone. In another minute we were there, and found that at the very apex of the funnel was a passage so low and narrow that we had to stoop as we crept along it in Indian file. After some fifty yards of this creeping, the passage suddenly widened into a cave, so huge that we could see neither the roof nor the sides. We only knew that it was a cave by the echo of our tread and the perfect quiet of the heavy air. On we went for many minutes in absolute awed silence, like lost souls in the depth of Tartarus, Ayesha's white and ghostlike form flitting in front of us, till once more the cavern ended in a passage which opened into a second cavern much smaller than the first. Indeed, we could clearly make out the arch and stony banks of this second cave, and, from their rent and jagged appearance, discovered that, like the first long passage through which we had passed in the cliff, before we came to the quivering spur, it had to all appearance been torn in the bowels of the rock by the terrific force of some explosive gas. At length this cave ended in a third passage, through which gleamed a faint glow of light.

I heard Ayesha give a sigh of relief as this light dawned upon us.

"It is well," she said; "prepare to enter the very womb of the Earth, wherein she doth conceive the Life that ye see brought forth in man and beast — ay, and in every tree and flower."

Swiftly she sped along, and after her we stumbled as best we might, our hearts filled like a cup with mingled dread and curiosity. What were we about to see? We passed down the tunnel; stronger and stronger the light beamed, reaching us in great flashes like the rays from a lighthouse, as one by one they are thrown wide upon the darkness of the waters. Nor was this all, for with the flashes came a soul-shaking sound like that of thunder and of crashing trees. Now we were through it, and — oh, heavens!

We stood in a third cavern, some fifty feet in length by,

perhaps, as great a height, and thirty wide. It was carpeted with fine white sand, and its walls had been worn smooth by the action of I know not what. The cavern was not dark like the others, it was filled with a soft glow of rose-colored light, more beautiful to look on than anything that can be conceived. But at first we saw no flashes, and heard no more of the thunderous sound. Presently, however, as we stood in amaze, gazing at the wonderful sight, and wondering whence the rosy radiance flowed, a dread and beautiful thing happened. Across the far end of the cavern with a grinding and crashing noise — a noise so dreadful and awe-inspiring that we all trembled, and Job actually sank to his knees — there flamed out an awful cloud or pillar of fire, like a rainbow, many-colored, and, like the lightning, bright. For a space, perhaps forty seconds, it flamed and roared thus, turning slowly round and round, and then by degrees the terrible noise ceased, and with the fire it passed away — I know not whither — leaving behind it the same rosy glow that we had first seen.

"Draw near, draw near!" cried Ayesha, with a voice of thrilling exultation. "Behold the very Fountain and Heart of Life as it beats in the bosom of the great world. Behold the substance from which all things draw their energy, the bright Spirit of the Globe, without which it cannot live, but must grow cold and dead as the dead moon. Draw near, and wash ye in the living flames, and take their virtue into your poor frames in all its virgin strength — not as it now feebly glows within your bosoms, filtered thereto through all the fine strainers of a thousand intermediate lives, but as it is here in the very fount and seat of Being."

We followed her through the rosy glow up to the head of the cave, till at last we stood before the spot where the great pulse beat and the great flame passed. And as we went we became sensible of a wild and splendid exhilaration, of a glorious sense of such a fierce intensity of Life that the most buoyant moments of our strength seemed flat and tame and feeble beside it. It was the mere effluvium of the flame, the subtle ether that it cast off as it passed, working on us, and making us feel strong as giants and swift as eagles.

We reached the head of the cave, and gazed at each other in the glorious glow, and laughed aloud — even Job laughed, and he had not laughed for a week — in the lightness of our hearts and the divine intoxication of our brains. I know that

I felt as though all the varied genius of which the human intellect is capable had descended upon me. I could have spoken in blank verse of Shakespearean beauty, all sorts of great ideas flashed through my mind, it was as though the bonds of my flesh had been loosened, and left the spirit free to soar to the empyrean of its native power. The sensations that poured in upon me are indescribable. I seemed to live more keenly, to reach to a higher joy, and sip the goblet of a subtler thought than ever it had been my lot to do before. I was another and most glorified self, and all the avenues of the Possible were for a space laid open to the footsteps of the Real.

Then suddenly, whilst I rejoiced in this splendid vigor of a new-found self, from far, far away there came a dreadful muttering noise, that grew and grew to a crash and a roar, which combined in itself all that is terrible and yet splendid in the possibilities of sound. Nearer it came, and nearer yet, till it was close upon us, rolling down like all the thunder wheels of Heaven behind the horses of the lightning. On it came, and with it came the glorious blinding cloud of many-colored light, and stood before us for a space, turning, as it seemed to us, slowly round and round, and then, accompanied by its attendant pomp of sound, passed away I know not whither.

So astonishing was the wondrous sight that one and all of us, save She, who stood up and stretched her hands toward the fire, sank down before it and hid our faces in the sand.

When it was gone, Ayesha spoke.

"Now, Kallikrates," she said, "the mighty moment is at hand. When the great flame comes again thou must stand in it. First throw aside thy garments, for it will burn them, though thee it will not hurt. Thou must stand in the flame while thy senses will endure, and when it embraces thee suck the fire down into thy very heart, and let it leap and play around thy every part, so that thou lose no moiety of its virtue. Hearest thou me, Kallikrates?"

"I hear thee, Ayesha," answered Leo, "but of a truth — I am no coward — but I doubt me of that raging flame. How know I that it will not utterly destroy me, so that I lose myself and lose thee also? Nevertheless will I do it," he added.

Ayesha thought for a minute, and then said: —

"It is not wonderful that thou shouldst doubt. Tell me, Kallikrates, if thou seest me stand in the flame and come forth unharmed, wilt thou enter also?"

"Yes," he answered, "I will enter, even if it slay me. I have said that I will enter."

"And that will I also," I cried.

"What, my Holly," she laughed aloud; "methought that thou wouldst naught of length of days. Why, how is this?"

"Nay, I know not," I answered, "but there is that in my heart that calleth me to taste of the flame and live."

"It is well," she said. "Thou art not altogether lost in folly. See now, I will for the second time bathe me in this living bath. Fain would I add to my beauty and my length of days if that be possible. If it be not possible, at least it cannot harm me.

"Also," she continued, after a momentary pause, "is there another and a deeper cause why I would once again dip me in the flame. When first I tasted of its virtue, full was my heart of passion and of hatred of that Egyptian Amenartas, and therefore, despite my strivings to be rid thereof, hath passion and hatred been stamped upon my soul from that sad hour to this. But now it is otherwise. Now is my mood a happy mood, and filled am I with the purest part of thought, and so would I ever be. Therefore, Kallikrates, will I once more wash and make me clean, and yet more fit for thee. Therefore, also, when thou dost in turn stand in the fire, empty all thy heart of evil, and let sweet contentment hold the balance of thy mind. Shake loose thy spirit's wings, and take thy stand upon the utter verge of holy contemplation; ay, dream upon thy mother's kiss, and turn thee toward the vision of the highest good that hath ever swept on silver wings across the silence of thy dreams. For from the germ of what thou art in that dread moment shall grow the fruit of what thou shalt be for all unreckoned time.

"Now prepare thee, prepare even as though thy last hour was at hand, and thou wast about to cross to the land of shadows, and not through the gates of most glorious life. Prepare, I say!"

V. What We Saw.

Then came a few moments' pause during which Ayesha seemed to be gathering up her strength for the fiery trial, while we clung to each other, and waited in utter silence.

At last, from far, far away came the first murmur of sound, that grew and grew till it began to crash and bellow in the distance. As she heard it, Ayesha swiftly threw off her gauzy wrapping, loosened the golden snake from her kirtle, and then,

shaking her lovely hair about her like a garment, beneath its cover slipped the kirtle off, and replaced the snaky belt around her and outside the masses of falling hair. There she stood before us as Eve might have stood before Adam, clad in nothing but her abundant locks, held round by her golden band; and no words of mine can tell how sweet she looked — and yet how divine. Nearer and nearer came the thunder wheels of fire, and as they came she pushed one ivory arm through the dark masses of her hair and flung it round Leo's neck.

"Oh, my love, my love," she murmured, "wilt thou ever know how I have loved thee!" and she kissed him on the forehead, and then went and stood in the pathway of the flame of Life.

There was, I remember, to my mind something very touching about the words and that embrace upon the forehead. It was like a mother's kiss, and seemed to convey a benediction with it.

On came the crashing, rolling noise, and the sound thereof was as though a forest were being swept flat by a mighty wind, and then tossed up by it like so much grass, and thundered down a mountain side. Nearer and nearer it came; now flashes of light, forerunners of the revolving pillar of flame, were passing like arrows through the rosy air, and now the edge of the pillar itself appeared. Ayesha turned toward it, and stretched out her arms to greet it. On it came, very slowly, and lapped her round with flame. I saw the fire run up her form. I saw her lift it with both her hands as though it were water, and pour it over her head. I even saw her open her mouth and draw it down into her lungs, and a dread and wonderful sight it was.

Then she paused and stretched out her arms, and stood there quite still, with a heavenly smile upon her face, as though she were the very Spirit of the Flame.

The mysterious fire played up and down her dark and rolling locks, twining and twisting itself through and around them like threads of golden lace; it gleamed upon her ivory breast and shoulder, from which the hair had slipped aside; it slid along her pillared throat and delicate features, and seemed to find a home in the glorious eyes that shone and shone more brightly even than the spiritual essence.

Oh, how beautiful she looked there in the flame! No angel out of heaven could have worn a greater loveliness. Even now

my heart faints before the recollection of it, as she stood and smiled at our awed faces, and I would give half my remaining time upon this earth to see her once like that again.

But suddenly — more suddenly than I can describe — a kind of change came over her face, a change which I could not define or explain on paper, but none the less a change. The smile vanished and in its place there came a dry, hard look; the rounded face seemed to grow pinched, as though some great anxiety were leaving its impress upon it. The glorious eyes, too, lost their light, and, as I thought, the form its perfect shape and erectness.

I rubbed my eyes, thinking that I was the victim of some hallucination, or that the refraction from the intense light produced an optical delusion; and as I did so, the flaming pillar slowly twisted and thundered off whithersoever it passes to in the bowels of the great earth, leaving Ayesha standing where it had been.

As soon as it was gone she stepped forward to Leo's side — it seemed to me that there was no spring in her step — and stretched out her hand to lay it on his shoulder. I gazed at her arm. Where was its wonderful roundness and beauty? It was getting thin and angular. And her face — by Heaven! — *her face was growing old before my eyes!* I suppose that Leo saw it also; certainly he recoiled a step or two.

"What is it, my Kallikrates?" she said, and her voice — what was the matter with those deep and thrilling notes? They were quite high and cracked.

"Why, what is it — what is it?" she said confusedly. "I feel dazed. Surely the quality of the fire hath not altered. Can the principle of Life alter? Tell me, Kallikrates, is there aught wrong with my eyes? I see not clear," and she put her hand to her head and touched her hair — and, oh, *horror of horrors!* — it all fell off upon the floor, leaving her utterly bald.

"Oh, *look! look! look!*" shrieked Job, in a shrill falsetto of terror, his eyes nearly dropping out of his head, and foam upon his lips. "*Look! look! look!* she's shriveling up! she's turning into a monkey!" and down he fell upon the floor, foaming and gnashing in a fit.

True enough — I faint even as I write it in the living presence of that terrible recollection — she *was* shriveling up; the golden snake that had encircled her gracious form slipped over

her hips and fell upon the ground; smaller and smaller she grew; her skin changed color, and in place of the perfect whiteness of its luster it turned dirty brown and yellow, like an old piece of withered parchment. She felt at her bald head; the delicate hand was nothing but a claw now, a human talon, like that of a badly preserved Egyptian mummy, and then she seemed to realize what kind of change was passing over her, and she shrieked — ah, she shrieked! — she rolled upon the floor and shrieked!

Smaller she grew, and smaller yet, till she was no larger than a she baboon. Now the skin was puckered into a million wrinkles, and on the shapeless face was the stamp of unutterable age. I never saw anything like it; nobody ever saw anything like the frightful age that was graven on that fearful countenance, no bigger now than that of a two months' child, though the skull remained the same size, or nearly so, — and let all men pray to God they never may, if they wish to keep their reason.

At last she lay still, or only feebly moving. She who but two minutes before had gazed upon us the loveliest, noblest, most splendid woman the world had ever seen, she lay still before us, near the masses of her own dark hair, no larger than a big monkey, and hideous — ah, too hideous for words. And yet think of this — at that very moment I thought of it — it was the same woman!

She was dying; we saw it, and thanked God — for while she lived she could feel, and what must she have felt? She raised herself upon her bony hands, and blindly gazed around her, swaying her head slowly from side to side as a tortoise does. She could not see, for her whitish eyes were covered with a horny film. Oh, the horrible pathos of the sight! But she could still speak.

"Kallikrates," she said in husky, trembling notes. "Forget me not, Kallikrates. Have pity on my shame; I shall come again, and shall once more be beautiful, I swear it — it is true! *Oh — h — h — h!*" and she fell upon her face and was still.

On the very spot where twenty centuries before she had slain the old Kallikrates, she herself fell down and died.

Overcome with the extremity of horror, we, too, fell on the sandy floor of that dread place, and swooned away.

I know not how long we lay thus. Many hours, I suppose.

When at last I opened my eyes, the other two were still outstretched upon the floor. The rosy light still beamed like a celestial dawn, and the thunder wheels of the Spirit of Life still rolled upon their accustomed track, for as I awoke the great pillar was passing away. There, too, lay the hideous little monkey frame, covered with crinkled yellow parchment, that once had been the glorious She. Alas! it was no hideous dream — it was an awful and unparalleled fact!

What had happened to bring this shocking change about? Had the nature of the life-giving Fire changed? Did it perhaps from time to time send forth an essence of Death instead of an essence of Life? Or was it that the frame once charged with its marvelous virtue could bear no more, so that were the process repeated — it mattered not at what lapse of time — the two impregnations neutralized each other, and left the body on which they acted as it was before it ever came into contact with the very essence of life? This, and this alone, would account for the sudden and terrible aging of Ayesha, as the whole length of her two thousand years took effect upon her. I have not the slightest doubt myself but that the frame now lying before me was just what the frame of a woman would be if by any extraordinary means life could be preserved in her till she at length died at the age of twenty-two centuries.

But who can tell what had happened? There was the fact. Often since that awful hour I have reflected that it required no great stretch of imagination to see the finger of Providence in the matter. Ayesha locked up in her living tomb, waiting from age to age for the coming of her lover, worked but a small change in the order of the World. But Ayesha strong and happy in her love, clothed in immortal youth and godlike beauty, and the wisdom of the centuries, would have revolutionized society, and even perchance have changed the destiny of Mankind. Thus she opposed herself against the eternal Law, and strong though she was, by it was swept back to nothingness, swept back with shame and hideous mockery.

For some minutes I lay faintly turning these terrors over in my mind, while my physical strength came back to me, which it soon did in that buoyant atmosphere. Then I bethought me of the others, and staggered to my feet, to see if I could arouse them. But first I took up Ayesha's kirtle and the gauzy scarf with which she had been wont to hide her dazzling loveliness from the eyes of men, and, averting my head so that I might

not look upon it, covered up that dreadful relic of the glorious dead, that shocking epitome of human beauty and human life. I did this hurriedly, fearing lest Leo should recover and see it again.

Then, stepping over the perfumed masses of dark hair that lay upon the sand, I stooped down by Job, who was lying upon his face, and turned him over. As I did so, his arm fell back in a way that I did not like, and which sent a chill through me, and I glanced sharply at him. One look was enough. Our old and faithful servant was dead. His nerves, already shattered by all he had seen and undergone, had utterly broken down beneath this last dire sight, and he had died of terror, or in a fit brought on by terror. One had only to look at his face to see it.

It was another blow; but perhaps it may help people to understand how overwhelmingly awful was the experience through which we had passed — we did not feel it much at the time. It seemed quite natural that the poor old fellow should be dead. When Leo came to himself, which he did with a groan and trembling of the limbs about ten minutes afterwards, and I told him that Job was dead, he merely said, "Oh!" And, mind you, this was from no heartlessness, for he and Job were much attached to each other; and he often talks of him now with the deepest regret and affection. It was only that his nerves would bear no more. A harp can only give out a certain quantity of sound, however heavily it is smitten.

Well, I set myself to recovering Leo, who, to my infinite relief, I found was not dead, but only fainting, and in the end I succeeded, as I have said, and he sat up; and then I saw another dreadful thing. When we entered that awful place his curling hair had been of the ruddiest gold, now it was turning gray, and by the time we gained the outer air it was snow-white. Besides, he looked twenty years older.

"What is to be done, old fellow?" he said in a hollow, dead sort of voice, when his mind had cleared a little, and a recollection of what had happened forced itself upon it.

"Try and get out, I suppose," I answered; "that is, unless you would like to go in there," and I pointed to the column of fire that was once more rolling by.

"I would go in there if I were sure that it would kill me," he said with a little laugh. "It was my cursed hesitation that did

this. If I had not been afraid, she might never have tried to show me the road. But I am not sure. The fire might have the opposite effect upon me. It might make me immortal; and, old fellow, I have not the patience to wait a couple of thousand years for her to come back again as she did for me, I had rather die when my hour comes — and I should fancy that it isn't far off either — and go my ways to look for her. Do you go in, if you like."

But I merely shook my head; my excitement was as dead as ditch water, and my distaste for the prolongation of my mortal span had come back on me more strongly than ever. Besides, we neither of us knew what the effects of the fire might be. The result upon She had not been of an encouraging nature, and of the exact causes that produced that result we were, of course, ignorant.

"Well, my boy," I said, "we can't stop here till we go the way of those two," and I pointed to the little heap under the white garment and to the stiffening corpse of poor Job. "If we are going we had better go. But, by the way, I expect that the lamps have burned out;" and I took one up and looked at it, and sure enough it had.

"There is some more oil in the vase," said Leo, indifferently, "if it is not broken, at least."

I examined the vessel in question — it was intact. With a trembling hand I filled the lamps — luckily there was still some of the linen wick unburned. Then I lit them with one of our wax matches. While I did so we heard the pillar of fire approaching once more as it went on its never-ending journey, if, indeed, it was the same pillar that passed and repassed in a circle.

"Let's see it come once more," said Leo; "we shall never look upon its like again in this world."

It seemed a bit of idle curiosity, but somehow I shared it, and so we waited till, turning slowly round upon its own axis, it had flamed and thundered by; and I remember wondering for how many thousands of years this same phenomenon had been taking place in the bowels of the earth, and for how many more thousands it would continue to take place. I wondered also if any mortal eyes would ever again mark its passage, or any mortal ears be thrilled and fascinated by the swelling volume of its majestic sound. I do not think that they will. I believe that we are the last human beings who will ever see

that unearthly sight. Presently it had gone, and we, too, turned to go.

But before we did so we each took Job's cold hand in ours and shook it. It was a rather ghastly ceremony, but it was the only means in our power of showing our respect to the faithful dead and of celebrating his obsequies. The heap beneath the white garment we did not uncover. We had no wish to look upon that terrible sight again. But we went to the pile of rippling hair that had fallen from her in the agony of the hideous change which was worse than a thousand natural deaths, and each of us drew from it a shining lock, and these locks we still have, the sole memento that is left to us of Ayesha as we knew her in the fullness of her grace and glory. Leo pressed the perfumed hair to his lips.

"She called to me not to forget her," he said hoarsely—"and swore that we should meet again. By Heaven! I never will forget her. Here I swear that, if we live to get out of this, I will not for all my days have anything to say to another living woman, and that wherever I go I will wait for her as faithfully as she waited for me."

"Yes," I thought to myself, "if she comes back beautiful as we knew her. But supposing she came back like that!"

Well, and then we went. We went, and left those two in the presence of the very well and spring of life, but gathered to the cold company of death. How lonely they looked as they lay there, and how ill sorted! That little heap had been for two thousand years the wisest, loveliest, proudest creature—I can hardly call her woman—in the whole universe. She had been wicked, too, in her way; but, alas! such is the frailty of the human heart, her wickedness had not detracted from her charm. Indeed, I am by no means certain that it did not add to it. It was, after all, of a grand order; there was nothing mean or small about Ayesha.

And poor Job, too! His presentiment had come true, and there was an end of him. Well, he had a strange burial place—no Norfolk hind ever had a stranger, or ever will; and it is something to lie in the same sepulcher with the poor remains of the imperial She.

We looked our last upon them and the indescribable rosy glow in which they lay, and then with hearts far too heavy for words we left them, and crept thence broken-down men—so broken-down that we even renounced the chance of practically

immortal life, because all that made life valuable had gone from us, and we knew even then that to prolong our days indefinitely would only be to prolong our sufferings. For we felt — yes, both of us — that having once looked Ayesha in the eyes we could not forget her forever and ever while memory and identity remained. We both loved her now and for always; she was stamped and carven on our hearts, and no other woman could ever raze that splendid die. And I — there lies the sting — I had and have no right to think thus of her. As she told me, I was naught to her, and never shall be through the unfathomed depths of time, unless, indeed, conditions alter, and a day comes at last when two men may love one woman, and all three be happy in the fact. It is the only hope of my broken-heartedness, and a rather faint one. Beyond it I have nothing. I have paid down this heavy price, all that I am worth here and hereafter, and that is my sole reward. With Leo it is different, and often and often I bitterly envy him his happy lot, for if She was right, and her wisdom and knowledge did not fail her at the last, which arguing from the precedent of her own case I think unlikely, he has some future to look forward to. But I have none, and yet — mark the folly and the weakness of the human heart, and let him who is wise learn wisdom from it — yet I would not have it otherwise. I mean that I am content to give what I have given and must always give, and take in payment those crumbs that fall from my mistress' table, the memory of a few kind words, the hope one day in the far undreamed future of a sweet smile or two of recognition, and a little show of thanks for my devotion to her — and Leo.

If that does not constitute true love, I do not know what does, and all I have to say is that it is a very bad state of mind for a man on the wrong side of middle age to fall into.



SALLY IN OUR ALLEY.

By HENRY CAREY.

Of all the girls that are so smart
  There's none like pretty Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

There is no lady in the land
  Is half so sweet as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage nets
  And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
  To such as please to buy 'em.
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
  So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work,
  I love her so sincerely,
My master comes like any Turk,
  And bangs me most severely—
But let him bang his bellyful,
  I'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week
  I dearly love but one day—
And that's the day that comes betwixt
  A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm drest all in my best
  To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
  And often am I blamed
Because I leave him in the lurch
  As soon as text is named;
I leave the church in sermon time
  And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

When Christmas comes about again
  O then I shall have money;
I'll hoard it up, and box it all,
  I'll give it to my honey:

I would it were ten thousand pounds,
  I'd give it all to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

My master and the neighbors all
  Make game of me and Sally,
And, but for her, I'd better be
  A slave and row a galley;
But when my seven long years are out
  O then I'll marry Sally,—
O then we'll wed, and then we'll bed,
  But not in our alley!



HEMAN'S MA.

By ALICE BROWN.

(From "Meadow Grass." By permission of Copeland & Day.)

[Alice Brown, of Boston, is the author of "Fools of Nature," "Meadow Grass," "By Oak and Thorn," and lives of Robert Louis Stevenson and Mercy Otis Warren.]

It was half-past nine of a radiant winter's night, and the Widder Poll's tooth still ached, though she was chewing cloves, and had applied a cracker poultice to her cheek. She was walking back and forth through the great low-studded kitchen, where uncouth shadows lurked and brooded, still showing themselves ready to leap aloft with any slightest motion of the flames that lived behind the old black firedogs. At every trip across the room, she stopped to look from the window into the silver paradise without, and at every glance she groaned, as if groaning were a duty. The kitchen was unlighted save by the fire and one guttering candle; but even through such inadequate illumination the Widder Poll was a figure calculated to stir rich merriment in a satirical mind. Her contour was rather square than oblong, and she was very heavy. In fact, she had begun to announce that her ankles wouldn't bear her much longer, and she should "see the day when she'd have to set by, from mornin' to night, like old Anrutty Green that had the dropsy so many years afore she was laid away." Her face, also, was cut upon the broadest pattern in common use, and her small, dull eyes and closely shut mouth gave token of that firmness which, save in ourselves, we call obstinacy. To-night, however, her features were devoid of even their wonted dignity,

compressed, as they had been, by the bandage encircling her face. She looked like a caricature of her unprepossessing self. On one of her uneasy journeys to the window, she caught the sound of sleigh bells; and staying only to assure herself of their familiar ring, she hastily closed the shutter, and, going back to the fireplace, sank into a chair there, and huddled over the blaze. The sleigh drove slowly into the yard, and after the necessary delay of unharnessing, a man pushed open the side door, and entered the kitchen. He, too, was short and square of build, though he had no superfluous flesh. His ankles would doubtless continue to bear him for many a year to come. His face was but slightly accented; he had very thin eyebrows, light hair, and only a shaggy fringe of whisker beneath the chin. This was Heman Blaisdell, the Widder Poll's brother-in-law, for whom she had persistently kept house ever since the death of his wife, four years ago. He came in without speaking, and after shaking himself out of his greatcoat, sat silently down in his armchair by the fire. The Widder Poll held both hands to her face, and groaned again. At length, curiosity overcame her, and, quite against her judgment, she spoke. She was always resolving that she would never again take the initiative; but every time her resolution went down before the certainty that if she did not talk, there would be no conversation at all, — for Heman had a staying power that was positively amazing.

"Well?" she began interrogatively.

Heman only stirred slightly in his chair.

"*Well!* ain't you going to tell me what went on at the meetin'?"

Her quarry answered patiently, yet with a certain dogged resistance of her: —

"I dunno's there's anything to tell."

"How'd it go off?"

"'Bout as usual."

"Did you speak?"

"No."

"Lead in prayer?"

"No."

"Wa'n't you *asked?*"

"No."

"Well, my soul! Was Roxy Cole there?"

"Yes."

"Did you fetch her home?"

"No, I didn't!" Some mild exasperation animated his tone at last. The Widder detected it, and occupied herself with her tooth.

"My soul an' body! I wonder if it's goin' to grumble all night long!" she exclaimed, bending lower over the blaze. "I've tried everything but a roasted raisin, an' I b'lieve I shall come to that."

Heman rose, and opened the clock on the mantle; he drew forth the key from under the pendulum, and slowly wound up the time-worn machinery. In another instant, he would be on his way to bed; the Widder knew she must waste no time in hurt silence, if she meant to find out anything. She began hastily: —

"Did they say anything about the church fair?"

"They ain't goin' to have it."

"Not have it! Well, how *be* they goin' to git the shinglin' paid for?"

"They've got up the idee of an Old Folks' Concert."

"Singin'?"

"Singin' an' playin'."

"Who's goin' to play?"

"Brad Freeman an' Jont Marshall agreed to play fust an' second fiddle." Heman paused a moment, and straightened himself with an air of conscious pride; then he added: —

"They've asked me to play the bass viol."

The Widder had no special objections to this arrangement, but it did strike her as an innovation; and when she had no other reason for disapproval, she still believed in it on general principles. So altogether effective a weapon should never rust from infrequent use!

"Well!" she announced. "I never heard of such carry-in's-on, — never!"

Heman was lighting a small kerosene lamp. The little circle of light seemed even brilliant in the dusky room; it affected him with a relief so sudden and manifest as to rouse also a temporary irritation at having endured the previous gloom even for a moment.

"Ain't you got no oil in the house?" he exclaimed testily. "I wish you'd light up, evenin's, an' not set here by one taller candle!"

He had ventured on this remonstrance before, the only one

he permitted himself against his housekeeper's ways, and at the instant of making it, he realized its futility.

"The gre't lamp's all full," said the Widder, warming her apron and pressing it to her poulticed face. "You can light it, if you've got the heart to. That was poor Mary's lamp, an' hard as I've tried, I never could bring myself to put a match to that wick. How many evenin's I've seen her set by it, rockin' back'ards an' for'ards, — an' her needle goin' in an' out! She was a worker, if ever there was one, poor creatur'! At it all the time, jes' like a silkworm."

Heman was perfectly familiar with this explanation; from long repetition, he had it quite by heart. Possibly that was why he did not wait for its conclusion, but tramped stolidly away to his bedroom, where he had begun to kick off his shoes by the time his sister-in-law reached a period.

The Widder had a fresh poultice waiting by the fire. She applied it to her cheek, did up her face in an old flannel petticoat, and then, having covered the fire, toiled up to bed. It was a wearisome journey, for she carried a heavy soapstone which showed a tendency to conflict with the candle, and she found it necessary to hold together most of her garments; these she had "loosened a mite by the fire," according to custom on cold nights, after Heman had left her the field.

Next day, Heman went away into the woods chopping, and carried his dinner of doughnuts and cheese, with a chunk of bean porridge frozen into a ball, to be thawed out by his noontime fire. He returned much earlier than usual, and the Widder was at the window awaiting him. The swelling in her cheek had somewhat subsided; and the bandage, no longer distended by a poultice beneath, seemed, in comparison, a species of holiday device. She was very impatient. She watched Heman, as he went first to the barn; and even opened the back door a crack to listen for the rattling of chains, the signal of feeding or watering.

"What's he want to do that now for!" she muttered, closing the door again, as the cold struck her cheek. "He'll have to feed 'em agin, come night!"

But at last he came, and, according to his silent wont, crossed the kitchen to the sink, to wash his hands. He was an unobservant man, and it did not occur to him that the Widder had on her Tycoon rep, the gown she kept "for nice." Indeed, he was so unused to looking at her that he might well have for-

gotten her outward appearance. He was only sure of her size; he knew she cut off a good deal of light. One sign, however, he did recognize; she was very cheerful, with a hollow good nature which had its meaning.

"I got your shavin' water all ready," she began. "Don't you burn ye when ye turn it out."

It had once been said of the Widder Poll that if she could hold her tongue, the devil himself couldn't get ahead of her. But fortune had not gifted her with such endurance, and she always spoke too often and too soon.

"Brad Freeman's been up here," she continued, eying Heman, as she drew out the supper table and put up the leaves. "I dunno's I ever knew anybody so took up as he is with that concert, an' goin' to the vestry to sing to-night, an' all. He said he'd call here an' ride 'long o' you, an' I told him there'd be plenty o' room, for you'd take the pung."

If Heman felt any surprise at her knowledge of his purpose, he did not betray it. He poured out his shaving water, and looked about him for an old newspaper.

"I ain't goin' in the pung," he answered, without glancing at her. "The shoe's most off'n one o' the runners now."

The Widder Poll set a pie on the table with an emphasis unconsciously embodying her sense that now, indeed, had come the time for remedies.

"I dunno what you can take," she remarked, with that same foreboding liveliness. "Three on a seat, an' your bass viol, too!"

Heman was lathering his cheeks before the mirror, where a sinuous Venus and a too-corpulent Cupid disported themselves in a green landscape above the glass. "There ain't goin' to be three," he said patiently. "T'others are goin' by themselves."

The Widder took up her stand at a well-chosen angle, and looked at him in silence. He paid no attention to her, and it was she who, of necessity, broke into speech.

"*Well!* I've got no more to say. Do you mean to tell me you'd go off playin' on fiddles an' bass viols, an' leave me, your own wife's sister, settin' here the whole evenin' long, all swelled up with the toothache?"

Heman often felt that he had reached a state of mind where nothing could surprise him, but this point of view was really unexpected. He decided, however, with some scorn, that the

present misunderstanding might arise from a confusion of terms in the feminine mind.

"This ain't the concert," he replied, much as if she had proposed going to the polls. "It's the rehearsal. That means where you play the tunes over. The concert ain't comin' off for a month."

And now the Widder Poll spoke with the air of one injured almost beyond reparation.

"I'd like to know what difference that makes! If a man's goin' where he can't take his women folks, I say he'd better stay to home! an' if there's things goin' on there't you don't want me to git hold of, I tell you, Heman Blaisdell, you'd better by half stop shavin' you now, an' take yourself off to bed at seven o'clock! Traipsin' round playin' the fiddle at your age! Ain't I fond o' music?"

"No, you ain't!" burst forth Heman, roused to brief revolt where his beloved instrument was concerned. "You don't know 'Old Hunderd' from 'Yankee Doodle'!"

The Widder walked round the table and confronted him as he was turning away from the glass, shaving mug in hand.

"You answer me one question! I know who's goin' to be there, an' set in the chorus an' sing alto. Brad Freeman told me, as innercent as a lamb. Heman Blaisdell, you answer me! Be you goin' to bring anybody here to this house, an' set her in poor Mary's place? If you be, I ought to be the fust one to know it."

Heman looked at the shaving mug for a moment, as if he contemplated dashing it to the floor. Then he tightened his grasp on it, like one putting the devil behind him.

"No, I ain't," he said doggedly, adding under his breath, "not unless I'm drove to't."

"I dunno who could ha' done more," said the Widder, so patently with the air of continuing for an indefinite period that Heman reached up for his hat. "Where you goin'? Mercy sakes alive! don't you mean to eat no supper, now I've got it all ready?"

But Heman pushed his way past her and escaped, muttering something about "feedin' the critters." Perhaps the "critters" under his care were fed oftener than those on farms where the ingle nook was at least as cozy as the barn.

These slight skirmishes always left Heman with an uneasy

sense that somehow he also must be to blame, though he never got beyond wondering what could have been done to avert the squall. When he went back into the kitchen, however, — the "critters" fed, and his own nerves soothed by pitchforking the haymow with the vigor of one who assaults a citadel, — he was much relieved at finding the atmosphere as clear as usual; and as the early twilight drew on, he became almost happy at thought of the vivid pleasure before him. Never, since his wife died, had he played his bass viol in public; but he had long been in the habit of "slying off" upstairs to it, as to a tryst with lover or friend whom the world denied. The Widder Poll, though she heard it wailing and droning thence, never seriously objected to it; the practice was undoubtedly "shaller," but it kept him in the house.

They ate supper in silence; and then, while she washed the dishes, Heman changed his clothes, and went to the barn to harness. He stood for a moment, irresolute, when the horse was ready, and then backed him into the old blue pung. A queer little smile lurked at the corners of his mouth.

"I guess the shoe'll go once more," he muttered. "No, I ain't goin' to marry agin! I said I ain't, an' I ain't. But I guess I can give a neighbor a lift, if I want to!"

Brad Freeman was waiting near the back door when Heman led the horse out of the barn. He was lank and lean, and his thick red hair strayed low over the forehead. His army overcoat was rent here and there beyond the salvation which lay in his wife's patient mending, and his old fur cap showed the skin in moth-eaten patches; yet Heman thought, with a wondering protest, how young he looked, how free from care.

"Hullo, Heman!" called Brad.

"How are ye?" responded Heman, with a cordiality Brad never failed to elicit from his brother man.

Heman left the horse standing, and opened the back door.

He stopped short. An awful vision confronted him, — the Widder Poll, clad not only in the Tycoon rep, but her best palm-leaf shawl, her fitch tippet, and pumpkin hood; her face was still bandaged, and her head gear had been enwound by a green *barège* veil. She stepped forward with an alertness quite unusual in one so accustomed to remembering her weight of mortal flesh.

"Here!" she called, "you kind o' help me climb in. I ain't so spry as I was once. You better give me a real boost.

But, land! I mustn't talk. I wouldn't git a mite of air into that tooth for a dollar bill."

Heman stepped into the house for his bass viol, and brought it out with an extremity of tender care; he placed it, enveloped in its green-baize covering, in the bottom of the pung. Some ludicrous association between the baize and the green *barège* veil struck Brad so forcibly that he gave vent to a chuckle, sliding cleverly into a cough. He tried to meet Heman's eye, but Heman only motioned him to get in, and took his own place without a word. Brad wondered if he could be ill; his face had grown yellowish in its pallor, and he seemed to breathe heavily.

Midway in their drive to the vestry, they passed a woman walking briskly along in the snowy track. She was carrying her singing books under one arm, and holding her head high with that proud lift which had seemed, more than anything else, to keep alive her girlhood's charm.

"There's Roxy," said Brad. "Here, Heman, you let me jump out, an' you give her a lift." But Heman looked straight before him, and drove on.

By the time they entered Tiverton Street, the vestry was full of chattering groups. Heman was the last to arrive. He made a long job of covering the horse, inside the shed, resolved that nothing should tempt him to face the general mirth at the Widder's entrance. For he could not deceive himself as to the world's amused estimate of her guardianship and his submission. He had even withdrawn from the School Board, where he had once been proud to figure, because, entering the schoolroom one day at recess, he had seen, on a confiscated slate at the teacher's desk, a rough caricature representing "Heman and his Ma." The Ma was at least half the size of the slate, while Heman was microscopic; but, alas! his inflamed consciousness found in both a resemblance which would mightily have surprised the artist. He felt that if he ever saw another testimony of art to his unworthiness, he might commit murder.

When he did muster courage to push open the vestry door, the Widder Poll sat alone by the stove, still unwinding her voluminous wrappings, and the singers had very pointedly withdrawn by themselves. Brad and Jont had begun to tune their fiddles, and the first prelusive snapping of strings at once awakened Heman's nerves to a pleasant tingling; he was excited at the nearness of the coming joy. He drew a full breath

then she set one foot cautiously forward in the pung. There was a rending crash. The Widder Poll had stepped into the bass viol. She gave a little scream, and plunged forward.

"My foot's ketched!" she cried. "Can't you help me out?"

Heman dropped the reins; he put his hands on her arms, and pulled her forward. He never knew whether she reached the ground on her feet or her knees. Then he pushed past her, where she floundered, and lifted out his darling. He carried it into the kitchen, and lighted the candle, with trembling hands. He drew back the cover. The bass viol had its mortal wound; he could have laid both fists into the hole. He groaned.

"My God Almighty!" he said aloud.

The Widder Poll had stumbled into the room. She threw back her green veil, and her face shone ivory white under its shadow; her small eyes were starting. She looked like a culprit whom direst vengeance had overtaken at last. At the sound of her step, Heman lifted his hurt treasure, carried it tenderly into his bedroom, and shut the door upon it. He turned about, and walked past her out of the house. The Widder Poll followed him, wringing her mittened hands.

"O Heman!" she cried, "don't you look like that! Oh, you'll do yourself some mischief, I know you will!"

But Heman had climbed into the pung, and given Old Gameleg a vicious cut. Swinging out of the yard they went; and the Widder Poll ran after until, just outside the gate, she reflected that she never could overtake him and that her ankles were weak; then she returned to the house, groaning.

Heman was conscious of one thought only: if any man had come home with Roxy, he should kill him with his own hands. He drove on, almost to the vestry, and found no trace of her. He turned about, and, retracing his way, stopped at her mother's gate, left Old Gameleg, and strode into the yard. There was no light in the kitchen, and only a glimmer in the chamber above. Heman went up to the kitchen door and knocked. The chamber window opened.

"Who is it?" asked Mrs. Cole. "Why, that you, Heman? Anybody sick?"

"Where's Roxy?" returned Heman, as if he demanded her at the point of the bayonet.

"Why, she's been abed as much as ten minutes. The Tuckers brought her home."

"You tell her to come here! I want to see her."

"What! down there? Law, Heman! you come in the mornin'. She'll ketch her death o' cold gittin' up an' dressin', now she's got all warmed through."

"What's he want, mother?" came Roxy's clear voice from within the room. "That's Heman Blaisdell's voice."

"Roxy, you come down here!" called Heman, masterfully.

There was a pause, during which Mrs. Cole was apparently pulled away from the window. Then Roxy, her head enveloped in a shawl, appeared in her mother's place.

"Well!" she said impatiently. "What is it?"

Heman's voice found a pleading level.

"Roxy, will you marry me?"

"Why, Heman, you're perfectly ridiculous! At this time o' night, too!"

"You answer me!" cried Heman, desperately. "I want you! Won't you have me, Roxy? Say?"

"Roxy!" came her mother's muffled voice from the bed. "You'll git your death o' cold. What's he want? Can't you give him an answer an' let him go?"

"Won't you, Roxy?" called Heman. "Oh, won't you?"

Roxy began to laugh hysterically. "Yes," she said, and shut the window.

When Heman had put up the horse, he walked into the kitchen, and straight up to the Widder Poll, who stood awaiting him, clinging to the table by one fat hand.

"Now, look here!" he said, good-naturedly, speaking to her with a direct address he had not been able to use for many a month. "You listen to me. I don't want any hard feelin', but to-morrer mornin' you've got to pick up your things an' go. You can have the house down to the Holler, or you can go out nussin', but you come here by your own invitation, an' you've got to leave by mine. I'm goin' to be married as soon as I can git a license." Then he walked to the bedroom, and shut himself in with his ruined bass viol and the darkness.

And the Widder Poll did not speak.

There are very few cozy evenings when Heman and Roxy do not smile at each other across the glowing circle of their hearth, and ask, the one or the other, with a perplexity never to be allayed: —

"Do you s'pose she tumbled, or did she put her foot through it a purpose?"

But Heman is sure to conclude the discussion with a glowing tribute to Brad Freeman, his genius and his kindliness.

"I never shall forgit that o' Brad," he announces. "There wa'n't another man in the State o' New Hampshire could ha' mended it as he did. Why, you never'd know there was a brack in it!"



FOREST HYMN.

By WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

[William Cullen Bryant, an American poet, was born at Cummington, Mass., November 3, 1794. After attending Williams College for one year, he adopted law as a profession, but gradually abandoned it for literary and journalistic work. He became a voluminous contributor of prose and verse to periodicals, and for more than half a century was editorially connected with the New York *Evening Post*, in which he opposed the extension of slavery and supported the Union. He began to write poetry at an early age, and first won recognition with "Thanatopsis" (1816). His other notable compositions are: "The Ages," "The Flood of Years," "To a Waterfowl," and translations of the Iliad and Odyssey. His complete poetical works, edited by Parke Godwin, were published in 1883. Bryant died in New York, June 12, 1878.]

The groves were God's first temples. Ere man learned
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
And spread the roof above them, — ere he framed
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood,
Amidst the cool and silence, he knelt down
And offered to the Mightiest, solemn thanks
And supplication. For his simple heart
Might not resist the sacred influences,
Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,
And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed
His spirit with the thought of boundless power
And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
Only among the crowd, and under roofs
That our frail hands have raised? Let me, at least,



WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
Offer one hymn — thrice happy, if it find
Acceptance in His ear.

Father, thy hand
Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst look down
Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose
All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,
Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy breeze,
And shot toward heaven. The century-living crow
Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and died
Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,
Fit shrine for humble worshiper to hold
Communion with his Maker. These dim vaults,
These winding aisles, of human pomp or pride
Report not No fantastic carvings show,
The boast of our vain race to change the form
Of thy fair works. But thou art here — thou fill'st
The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
That run along the summit of these trees
In music, — thou art in the cooler breath,
That from the inmost darkness of the place,
Comes, scarcely felt; — the barky trunks, the ground,
The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with thee
Here is continual worship; — nature, here,
In the tranquillity that thou dost love,
Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly, around,
From perch to perch, the solitary bird
Passes, and yon clear spring, that, 'midst its herbs,
Wells softly forth and visits the strong roots
Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
Of all the good it does Thou hast not left
Thyself without a witness, in these shades,
Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength, and grace
Are here to speak of thee This mighty oak —
By whose immovable stem I stand and seem
Almost annihilated — not a prince,
In all that proud old world beyond the deep,
E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
Wears the green coronal of leaves with which
Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,

With scented breath, and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mold,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this wide universe.

My heart is awed within me, when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on,
In silence, round me — the perpetual work
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
Forever. Written on thy works I read
The lesson of thy own eternity.
Lo! all grow old and die — but see, again,
How on the faltering footsteps of decay
Youth presses — ever gay and beautiful youth
In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
Molder beneath them. Oh, there is not lost
One of earth's charms: upon her bosom yet,
After the flight of untold centuries,
The freshness of her far beginning lies
And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
Of his archenemy Death — yea, seats himself
Upon the tyrant's throne — the sepulcher,
And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
Makes his own nourishment. For he came forth
From thine own bosom, and shall have no end.

There have been holy men who hid themselves
Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
Their lives to thought and prayer, till they outlived
The generation born with them, nor seemed
Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks
Around them; — and there have been holy men
Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
But let me often to these solitudes
Retire, and in thy presence reassure
My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
The passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink
And tremble and are still. Oh, God! when thou
Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire
The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,
With all the waters of the firmament,
The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the woods
And drowns the villages; when, at thy call,

Uprises the great deep and throws himself
Upon the continent, and overwhelms
Its cities — who forgets not, at the sight
Of these tremendous tokens of thy power,
His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?
Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
Of the mad unchained elements to teach
Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate
In these calm shades thy milder majesty,
And to the beautiful order of thy works,
Learn to conform the order of our lives.



THE NET OF DEATH.[1]

By A. CONAN DOYLE

(From "The Firm of Girdlestone")

[Arthur Conan Doyle, Scotch novelist, was born in Edinburgh, May 22, 1859 He is the son of Charles Doyle, an artist, and nephew of Richard Doyle of *Punch*. He received his early education at Stonyhurst, in Lancashire, and in Germany, studied medicine at Edinburgh four years; and practiced at Southsea from 1882 to 1890, when he gave his whole attention to literature. He first became popular with the detective stories, "A Study in Scarlet," "The Sign of the Four," and "Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" His other works include: the historical novels "Micah Clarke," "The White Company," "The Refugees," "Rodney Stone," and "Uncle Bernac", "The Captain of the Polestar"; "Stark Munro Letters", "Round the Red Lamp"; "Tragedy of the Korosko." He is also the author of the one-act play, "A Story of Waterloo," produced by Sir Henry Irving in 1894]

Girdlestone sends for the Doctor.

When Kate came to herself after the terrible incident which frustrated her attempt at escape she found herself in bed in her own little room. By the light which shone in through the window she knew that it must be well on in the day. Her head was throbbing violently, and she was so weak that she could hardly raise herself in bed. When she looked round she found that Rebecca had brought a chair in from her room and was sitting by the fire. At the sound of her movement the maid glanced up and perceived that her mistress had recovered consciousness.

[1] By permission of Chatto & Windus (Cr. 8vo. Price 3s. 6d.)

"Lor' bless me!" she cried, "you've given us a pretty fright. We thought you wasn't coming back to your senses no more. You've been a lyin' there since the middle of the night, and now it's close on to twelve o'clock."

Kate lay silent for some little time putting together all that had occurred. "Oh, Rebecca," she said at last, shivering at the recollection, "I have seen the most dreadful sight. Either I am going mad, or I have seen a ghost."

"We all thought you were a ghost yourself," said the girl, reproachfully. "What with the screechin' and you lying so white in the middle of the passage, it was enough to make any one's 'air turn gray. Mister Girdlestone, he lifted you up, an' carried you back into your room. He was cut to the heart, the good gentleman, when he saw what you'd been after, a tryin' to give him the slip."

"Oh, this dreadful house will kill me—it will kill me!" Kate moaned. "I cannot stay in it any longer. What shall I do? Oh, Rebecca, Rebecca, what shall I do?"

The fresh-colored maid came across with a simper upon her pretty, vulgar face, and sat on the side of the bed. "What's the matter, then?" she asked. "What is it that you have seen?"

"I have seen—oh, Rebecca, it is too dreadful to talk of. I have seen that poor monk who was killed in the cellars. It was not fancy. I saw him as plainly as I see you now, with his tall, thin figure, and long loose gown, and the brown cowl drawn down over his face."

"God preserve us!" cried Rebecca, nervously glancing over her shoulder. "It is enough to give one the creeps."

"I pray that I may never see such a sight again. Oh, Rebecca, if you have the heart of a woman help me to get away from this place. They mean that I should never go from it alive. I have read it in my guardian's eyes. He longs for my death. Do, do tell me what I should do for the best."

"I'm surprised at you!" the maid said with dignity. "When Mister Girdlestone and Mister Ezra is so good to you, and provides you with a country house and every convenience as 'eart could wish; all you can find to do is to go screamin about at night, and then talk as if you was a goin' to be murdered in the day. I really am surprised. There's Mister Girdlestone a callin'. He'd be shocked, poor gentleman, if he knew how you was abusin' of him." Rebecca's face assumed

an expression of virtuous indignation, as she swept out of the room, but her black eyes shone with the unholy light of cruelty and revenge.

Left to herself, Kate rose and dressed as well as her weakness would permit. Her nerves were so shaken that she started at the least sound, and she could hardly recognize the poor pale face which she saw in the glass as her own. She scarcely finished her toilet before her guardian came up into her room.

"You are better, then?" he said.

"I am very ill," she answered gently.

"No wonder, after rushing about the corridors in that absurd fashion in the dead of the night. Rebecca tells me that you imagine you met with some apparition. You are crying. Are you so unhappy, then?"

"Very, very miserable," Kate answered, sinking her face upon her hands.

"Ah," said Girdlestone, softly, "it is only in some higher life that we shall find entire peace and contentment." His voice had altered so that a little warm spring of hope began to rise in the girl's heart that perhaps the sight of her many miseries was beginning to melt this iron man.

"Beyond the grave is rest," he continued, in the same gentle tones. "It has seemed to me sometimes that if it were not for the duties which I have to perform in this world, and the many who are dependent upon me, I should be tempted to shorten my existence in order to attain the peace which is to come. Some precisians have pronounced it to be sinful to cut the thread of life. For my part I have never thought it so, and yet my view of morals has been a strict one. I hold that of all things in this world one's life is the thing which belongs most entirely to oneself, and may therefore most freely be terminated when it seems good to us." He picked up the phial from the mantelpiece, and gazed thoughtfully at it. "How strange," he said, "to think that within the compass of this tiny bottle lies a cure for every earthly evil. One draught and the body slips off like a garment, while the soul walks forth in all its beauty and freedom. Trouble is over. One draught, and—— Ah, let go, I say! What have you done!"

Kate had snatched the bottle from him, and with a quick feminine gesture had hurled it against the wall, where it splintered to pieces, sending a strong turpentiney odor through the

apartment. Her strength was so impaired that she staggered back after this feat, and sat down on the side of the bed, while her guardian, grim and threatening, stood over her with his long, bony fingers opening and shutting as though he found it difficult to keep them from her throat.

"It will not help you in it," she said, in a low but firm voice. "You would kill my soul as well."

The mask had fairly dropped from Girdlestone. No gaunt old wolf could have glared down with fiercer eyes or a more cruel mouth. "You fool!" he hissed.

"I am not afraid to die," she said, looking up at him with brave, steadfast eyes.

Girdlestone recovered his self-possession by an effort. "It is clear to me," he said calmly, "that your reason is unhinged. What is all this nonsense about death? There is nothing that will harm you except your own evil actions." He turned abruptly and strode out of the room with the firm and decided step of a man who has taken an irrevocable resolution.

With a set and rigid face he ascended the steps which led to his bedroom, and, rummaging in his desk, produced a telegram form. This he filled up and took with him downstairs. There he put on his hat and started off to the Bedsworth Post Office at full speed.

At the avenue gate he met his sentinel, who was sitting on his camp stool as grim as ever.

"She is very bad, Stevens," Girdlestone said, stopping and jerking his head in the direction of the house. "She is going downhill. I am afraid that she can't last long. If any one asks you about her, you can say that she was despaired of. I am just sending off a telegram to a doctor in London, so that she may have the best advice."

Stevens touched his greasy peaked cap as a token of respect. "She was down here behavin' outrageous the other day," said he. "'Let me pass,' says she, 'and you shall have ten golden guineas.' Them's her very words. 'Not for ten hundred golden guineas,' I answers, 'would William Stevens, hesquire, do what he didn't ought to.'"

"Very proper, very proper indeed," said Girdlestone, approvingly. "Every man in his own station has his own duties to fulfill, and he will be judged as he has fulfilled them, well or ill. I shall see that you are no loser by your stanchness."

"Thank ye, guv'nor."

"She is wild and delirious, and can get about in spite of her low state of health. It is possible that she may make some effort to get away, so be vigilant. Good day to you."

"Good day, sir." William Stevens stood at the gate looking pensively after his employer; then he reseated himself upon his camp stool, and, lighting his pipe, resumed his meditations. "I can't make naught of it," he muttered, scratching his head. "It do seem uncommon queer, to be sure. The boss, he says, 'she is very low,' says he, and then next minute he says, 'she may be comin' down and tryin' to escape.' I've seen diers o' all shapes and sizes, but I've never seed one as went a galivantin' about like this — at least, not among them as died a nat'ral death. It do seem uncommon strange. Then, again, he's off telegraphin' for a doctor in Lunnon, when there's Doctor Corbett, o' Claxton, or Doctor Hutton, o' Bedsworth, would come quick enough if he wanted them. I can't make no sense of it. Why, bust my buttons!" he continued, taking his pipe out of his mouth in a paroxysm of astonishment, "if here bain't the dier herself!"

It was, indeed, Kate, who, learning that her guardian was gone, had come out with some vague idea of making a last struggle for her life and freedom. With the courage of despair, she came straight down to the avenue to the sole spot where escape seemed possible.

"Good mornin', missy," cried Stevens, as she approached. "You don't look extra bright this mornin', but you ain't as bad as your good guardian made me think. You don't seem to feel no difficulty in gettin' about."

"There is nothing the matter with me," the girl answered earnestly. "I assure you there is not. My mind is as sound as yours."

"That's what they all says," said the ex-warder, with a chuckle.

"But it is so. I cannot stay in that house longer. I cannot, Mr. Stevens, I cannot! It is haunted, and my guardian will murder me. He means to. I read it in his eyes. He as good as tried this morning. To die without one word to those I love — without any explanation of what has passed — that would give a sting to death."

"Well, if this ain't outragis!" cried the one-eyed man, "perfectly outragis! Going to murder you, says you! What's he a goin' to do that for?"

"God knows! He hates me for some reason. I have never gone against his wishes, save in one respect, and in that I can never obey him, for it is a matter in which he has no right to command."

"Quite so!" said Stevens, winking his one eye. "I knows the feeling myself, cuss me, but I do! 'Thine for once and thine for never,' as the song says."

"Why won't you let me pass?" pleaded Kate. "You may have had daughters of your own. What would you do if they were treated as I have been? If I had money you should have it, but I have none. Do, do let me go! God will reward you for it. Perhaps when you are on your last bed of sickness the memory of this one good deed may outweigh all the evil that you have done."

"Lor' don't she speak!" said Stevens, appealing confidentially to the nearest tree. "It's like a dictionary."

"And you won't lose by it in this life," the girl added eagerly. "See, here is my watch and my chain. You shall have that if you will let me through."

"Let's see it." He opened it and examined it critically. "Eighteen carat—it's only a Geneva though. What can you expect for a Geneva?"

"And you shall have fifty pounds when I get back to my friends. Do let me pass, good Mr. Stevens, for my guardian may return at any moment."

"See here, missy," Stevens said solemnly, "dooty is dooty, and if every hair of your 'ead was tagged wi' a jewel, and you offered to make me your barber, I wouldn't let you through that gate. As to this 'ere watch, if so be as you would like to write a line to your friends, I'll post it for you at Bedsworth in exchange for it, though it be only a Geneva."

"You good, kind man," cried Kate, all excitement and delight. "I have a pencil in my pocket. What shall I do for paper?" She looked eagerly round and spied a small piece which lay among the brushwood. With a cry of joy she picked it out. It was very coarse and very dirty, but she managed to scrawl a few lines upon it, describing her situation and asking for aid. "I will write the address upon the back," she said. "When you get to Bedsworth you must buy an envelope and ask the post-office people to copy the address on to it."

"I bargained to post it for the Geneva," he said. "I didn't bargain to buy envelopes and copy addresses. That's a nice

pencil case of yourn. Now I'll make a clean job of it if you'll throw that in."

Kate handed it over without a murmur. At last a small ray of light seemed to be finding its way through the darkness which had so long surrounded her. Stevens put the watch and pencil case in his pocket, and took the little scrap of paper on which so much depended. As Kate handed it to him she saw over his shoulder that coming up the lane was a small pony carriage, in which sat a buxom lady and a very small page. The sleek little brown pony which drew it ambled along at a methodical pace which showed that it was entirely master of the situation, while the whole turn-out had an indescribable air of comfort and good nature. Poor Kate had been so separated from her kind that the sight of people who, if not friendly, were at least not hostile to her, sent a thrill of pleasure into her heart. There was something wholesome and prosaic, too, about this homely equipage, which was inexpressibly soothing to a mind so worn by successive terrors.

"Here's some one a comin'," cried Stevens. "Clear out from here—it's the governor's orders."

"Oh, do let me stay and say one word to the lady!"

Stevens seized his great stick savagely. "Clear out!" he cried in a hoarse, angry voice, and made a step towards her as if he would strike her. She shrank away from him, and then a sudden thought seizing her, she turned and ran through the woods as fast as her feeble strength would allow. The instant that she was out of sight, Stevens very deliberately and carefully tore up the little slip of paper with which she had intrusted him, and scattered the pieces to the wind.

A Gleam of Light.

Kate Harston fled as quickly as she could through the wood, stumbling over the brambles and crashing through the briers, regardless of pain or scratches or anything else which could stand between her and the possibility of safety. She soon gained the shed and managed to mount on the top of it by the aid of the barrel. Craning her neck she could see the long dusty lane, with the bare withered hedges upon either side, and the dreary line of the railway embankment beyond. There was no pony carriage in sight.

She hardly expected that there would be, for she had taken

a short cut, and the carriage would have to go some distance round. The road along which it was traveling ran at right angles to the one which she was now overlooking, and the chances were equal as to whether the lady would turn round or go straight on. In the latter case, it would not be possible for her to attract her attention. Her heart seemed to stand still with anxiety as she peered over the high wall at the spot where the two roads crossed.

Presently she heard the rattle of wheels, and the brown pony trotted round the corner. The carriage drew up at the end of the lane, and the driver seemed to be uncertain how to proceed. Then she shook the reins, and the pony lumbered on along the road. Kate gave a cry of despair, and the last ray of hope died away from her heart.

It chanced, however, that the page in the carriage was just at that happy age when the senses are keen and on the alert. He heard the cry, and glancing round he saw through a break in the hedge that a lady was looking over the wall which skirted the lane they had passed. He mentioned the fact to his mistress. "Maybe we'd better go back, ma'am," he said.

"Maybe we'd better not, John," said the buxom lady. "People can look over their garden walls without our interfering with them, can't they?"

"Yes, ma'am, but she was a hollerin' at us."

"No, John, was she though? Maybe this is a private road and we have no right to be on it."

"She gave a holler as if some one was a hurtin' of her," said John, with decision.

"Then we'll go back," said the lady, and turned the pony round.

Hence it came about that just as Kate was descending with a sad heart from her post of observation, she was electrified to see the brown pony reappear, and come trotting round the curve of the lane with a rapidity which was altogether foreign to that quadruped's usual habits. Indeed, the girl turned so very white at the sight, and her face assumed such an expression of relief and delight, that the lady who was approaching saw at once that it was no common matter which had caused her to summon them.

"What is it, my dear?" she cried, pulling up when she came abreast of the place. Her good, kind heart was touched already by the pleading expression upon the girl's sweet face.

"Oh, madam, whoever you may be," said Kate, in a low, rapid voice, "I believe God has sent you here this day. I am shut up in these grounds, and shall be murdered unless help comes."

"Be murdered!" cried the lady in the pony carriage, dropping back in her seat and raising her hands in astonishment.

"It is only too true," Kate said, trying to speak concisely and clearly so as to enforce conviction, but feeling a choking sensation about her throat, as though an hysterical attack were impending. "My guardian has shut me up here for some weeks, and I firmly believe that he will never let me out alive. Oh, don't, pray don't think me mad! I am as sane as you are, though God knows what I have gone through has been enough to shake my reason."

This last appeal of Kate's was in answer to an expression of incredulity and doubt which had passed over the face of the lady below. It was successful in its object, for the ring of truth with which she spoke and the look of anxiety and terror upon her face were too genuine to be mistaken. The lady drew her rein so as to bring the carriage as near the wall as was possible without losing sight of Kate's face.

"My dear," she said, "you may safely tell me everything. Whatever I can do to help you shall be done, and where I am powerless there are others who are my friends and may be of assistance. Scully is my name — Mrs. Lavinia Scully, of London. Don't cry, my poor girl, but tell me all about it, and let us see how we can put matters right."

Thus encouraged, Kate wiped away the tears which had been brought to her eyes by the unwonted sound of a friendly voice. Leaning forward as far as she could, and preventing herself from falling by passing her arm round a great branch which shot across the top of the shed, she gave in as few words as she could a detailed account of all that had befallen her. She described her guardian's anxiety that she should marry his son, her refusal, their sudden departure from London, their life at the Priory, the manner in which she was cut off from all human aid, and the reasons which made her believe that an attempt would be made upon her life. In conclusion, she narrated the scene which had occurred that very morning, when her guardian had tempted her to commit suicide. The only incident which she omitted from her story was that which had occurred the night before, for she felt that it might put too

severe a tax upon Mrs. Scully's credulity. Indeed, looking back at it she almost persuaded herself that the sight which she had seen might be some phantom conjured up by her own imagination, weakened as she was in mind and in body.

Having concluded her narrative, she wound up by imploring her new-found friend to assist her by letting her friends in London know what had become of her and where she was. Mrs. Scully listened with a face which expressed alternately the most profound pity and the most burning indignation. When Kate had finished she sat silent for a minute or more entirely absorbed in her own thoughts. She switched her whip up and down viciously, and her usually placid countenance assumed an expression so fierce that Kate, looking down at her, feared that she had given her offense. When she looked up at last, however, she smiled so pleasantly that the poor girl was reassured, and felt instinctively that she had really found a true and effective friend at last.

"We must act promptly," she said, "for we don't know what they may be about, or what their plans are for the future. Who did you say your friends were?"

"Dr. Dimsdale, of Phillimore Gardens, Kensington."

"Hasn't he got a grown-up son?"

"Yes," said Kate, with a slight flush on her pale cheeks.

"Ah!" cried the good lady, with a very roguish smile. "I see how the land lies. Of course, of course, why shouldn't it? I remember hearing about that young man. I have heard about the Girdlestones also. African merchants they were in the city. You see I know all about you."

"You know Tom?" Kate cried in astonishment.

"Oh, don't let us get talking of Tom," said Mrs. Scully, good-humoredly. "When girls get on a subject of that sort there's an end to everything. What I want now is business. In the first place, I shall drive down to Bedsworth, and I shall send to London."

"God bless you!" ejaculated Kate.

"But not to Phillimore Gardens. Hot-headed young men do foolish things under such circumstances as these. This is a case that wants careful management. I know a gentleman in London who is just the man, and who I know would be only too proud to help a lady in distress. He is a retired officer, and his name is Major Clutterbuck — Major Tobias Clutterbuck."

"Oh, I know him very well, and I have heard of you, too,"

said Kate, with a smile. "I remember your name now in connection with his."

It was Mrs. Scully's turn to blush now. "Never mind that," she said. "I can trust the major, and I know he will be down here at a word from me. I shall let him have the facts, and he can tell the Dimsdales if he thinks it best. Good-by, dear, don't be unhappy any more, but remember that you have friends outside who will very quickly set all right. Good-by!" and waving her hand in encouragement, the good widow woke up the pony, which had fallen fast asleep, and rattled away down the lane in the direction from which she had come.

The Major has a Letter.

At four o'clock Mr. Girdlestone stepped into the Bedsworth telegraph office and wired his short message. It ran thus: "Case hopeless. Come on to-morrow with a doctor." On receipt of this he knew by their agreement that his son would come down, bringing with him the man of violence whom he had spoken of at their last interview. There was nothing for it now but that his ward should die. If he delayed longer the crash might come before her money was available, and then how vain all regrets would be.

It seemed to him that there was very little risk in the matter. The girl had had no communication with any one. Even of those around her Mrs. Jorrocks was in her dotage, Rebecca Taylforth was stanch and true, and Stevens knew nothing. Every one on the country side had heard of the invalid young lady at the Priory. Who would be surprised to hear that she had passed away? He dare not call in any local medical man, but his inventive brain had overcome the difficulty, and had hit upon a device by which he might defy both doctors and coroner. If all went as he had planned it, it was difficult to see any chance of detection. In the case of a poorer man the fact that the girl's money reverted to him might arouse suspicion, but he rightly argued that with his great reputation no one would ever dream that such a consideration could have weight with him.

Having sent the telegram off and so taken a final step, John Girdlestone felt more at his ease. He was proud of his own energy and decision. As he walked very pompously and gravely down the village street his heart glowed within him at

terrible crime. As a matter of fact, with all her sympathy the worthy woman had taken a large part of Kate's story with the proverbial grain of salt. It seemed to her to be incredible and impossible that in this nineteenth century such a thing as deliberate and carefully planned murder should occur in Christian England. That these things occur in the abstract we are ready to admit, but we find it very difficult to realize that they may come within the horizon of our own experience. Hence Mrs. Scully set no importance upon Kate's fears for her life, and put them down to the excited state of the girl's imagination. She did consider it, however, to be a very iniquitous and unjustifiable thing that a young girl should be cooped up and separated from all the world in such a very dreary place of seclusion as the Priory. This consideration and nothing more serious had set that look of wrath upon her pleasant face, and had stirred her up to frustrate Girdlestone and to communicate with Kate's friends.

Her intention had been to telegraph to London, but as she drove to Bedsworth she bethought her how impossible it would be for her within the limits of a telegram to explain to her satisfaction all that she wanted to express. A letter, she reflected, would, if posted now, reach the major by the first post on Saturday morning. It would simply mean a few hours' delay in the taking of steps to relieve Kate, and what difference could a few hours more or less make to the girl. She determined, therefore, that she would write to the major, explaining all the circumstances and leave it to him what course of action should be pursued.

Mrs. Scully was well known at the post office, and they quickly accommodated her with the requisites for correspondence. Within a quarter of an hour she had written, sealed, stamped, and posted the following epistle: —

Dearest Toby, — I am afraid you must find your period of probation very slow. Poor boy, what does he do? No billiards, no cards, no betting — how does he manage to get through the day at all? Smokes, I suppose, and looks out of the window, and tells all his grievances to Mr. Von Baumser. Aren't you sorry that ever you made the acquaintance of Morrison's second floor front? Poor Toby!

Who do you think I have come across down here? No less a person than that Miss Harston who was Girdlestone's ward. You used to talk about her, I remember, and indeed you were a great

admirer of hers. You would be surprised if you saw her now, so thin and worn and pale. Still her face is very sweet and pretty, so I won't deny your good taste—how could I after you have paid your addresses to me?

Her guardian has brought her down here and has locked her up in a great bleak house called the Priory. She has no one to speak to, and is not allowed to write letters. She seemed to be heart-broken because none of her friends know where she is, and she fears that they may imagine that she has willingly deserted them. Of course, by her friends she means that curly-headed Mr. Dimsdale that you spoke of. The poor girl is in a very low, nervous state, and told me over the wall of the park that she feared her guardian had designs on her life I can hardly believe that, but I do think that she is far from well, and that it is enough to drive her mad to coop her up like that. We must get her out somehow or another. I suppose that her guardian is within his rights, and that it is not a police matter. You must consider what must be done, and let young Dimsdale know if you think best. He will want to come down to see her, no doubt, and if Toby were to come too I should not be sorry.

I should have telegraphed about it, but I could not explain myself sufficiently I assure you that the poor girl is in a very bad way, and we can't be too energetic in what we do. It was very sad to hear the positive manner in which she declared that her guardian would murder her, though she did not attempt to give any reason why he should commit such a terrible crime. We saw a horrid one-eyed man at the gate who appeared to be on guard to prevent any one from coming out or in On our way to Bedsworth we met no less a person than the great Mr. Girdlestone himself, and we actually drove so clumsily that we splashed him all over with mud. Wasn't that a very sad and unaccountable thing? I fancy I see Toby smiling over that.

Good-by, my dear lad. Be as good as you can. I know you've got rather out of the way of it, but practice works wonders

Ever yours, LAVINIA SCULLY.

It happened that on the morning on which this missive came to Kennedy Place Von Baumser had not gone to the city. The major had just performed his toilet, and was marching up and down with a cigarette in his mouth and the *United Service Gazette* in his hand, descanting fluently, as is the habit of old soldiers, on the favoritism of the Horse Guards and the deterioration of the service.

"Look at this fellow Carmoichael!" he cried excitedly, slapping the paper with one hand while he crumpled it up

with the other. "They've made him lieutinant-gineral! The demndest booby in the rigiment, sir! A fellow who's seen no service and never heard a shot fired in anger. They promoted him on the strength of a sham fight bedad. He commanded a defending force operating along the Thames and opposing an invading army that was advancing from Guildford. Did iver ye hear such infernal nonsense in your life? And there's Stares, and Knight, and Underwood, and a dozen more I could mintion, that have volunteered for everything since the Sikh war of '46, all neglected, sir—neglected! The British Army is going straight to the divil."

"Dat's a very bad lookout for the devil," said Von Baumser, filling up a cup of coffee.

The major continued to stride angrily about the room. "That's why we niver have a satisfactory campaign with a European foe," he broke out. "Our success is always half and half, and leads to nothing. Yet we have the finest raw material and the greatest individual fighting power and divilment of any army in the world."

"Always, of course, not counting de army of his most graceworthy majesty the Emperor William," said Von Baumser, with his mouth full of toast. "Here is a girl mit a letter. Let us hope that it is my Frankfort money."

"Two to one it's for me."

"Ah, he must not bet!" cried Von Baumser, with upraised finger. "You are right, though. It is for you, and from the proper quarter, too, I think."

It was the letter which we have already quoted. The major broke the seal and read it over very carefully, after which he read it again. Von Baumser, watching him across the table, saw a very anxious and troubled look upon his ruddy face.

"I hope dere is nothing wrong mit my good vriend, Madame Scully?" he remarked at last.

"No, nothing wrong with her. There is with some one else, though," and with that he read to his companion all that part of his letter which referred to Miss Harston.

"Dat is no joke at all," the German remarked, and the two sat for some little time lost in thought, the major with the letter still lying open upon his knee.

"What d'ye think of it?" he asked at last.

"I think dat it is a more bad thing than the good madame seems to think. I think that if Miss Harston says that Herr

Girdlestone intends to kill her, it is very likely dat he has dat intention."

"Ged, he's not a man to stick at troifles," the major said, rubbing his chin reflectively. "Here's a nice kettle of fish! What the deuce could cause him to do such a thing?"

"Money, of course. I have told you, my good vriend, dat since a year de firm has been in a very bad way indeed. It is not generally known, but I know it, and so do others. Dis girl, I have heard, has money which vould come to the old man in case of her death. It is as plain as de vingers on my hand."

"Be George, the thing looks very ugly!" said the major, pacing up and down the room. "I believe that fellow and his beauty of a son are game for anything. Lavinia takes the matter too lightly. Fancy any one being such a scoundrel as to lay a hand on that dear girl, though. Ged, Baumser, it makes ivery drop of blood in me body tingle in me veins!"

"My dear vriend," Von Baumser answered, "it is very good of your blood for to tingle, but I do not see how dat vill help the mees. Let us be practical, and make up our brains what we should do."

"I must find young Dimsdale at once. He has a right to know."

"Yes, I should find him. Dere is no doubt dat you and he should at once start off for dis place. I know dat young man. Dere vill be no holding him at all when he has heard of it. You must go too, to prevent him from doing dummheiten, and also because good Madame Scully has said so in her letter."

"Certainly. We shall go down together. One of us will manage to see the young lady and find out if she requoires assistance. Bedad, if she does she shall have it, guardian or no guardian. If we don't whip her out in a brace of shakes me name's not Clutterbuck."

"You must remember," remarked Baumser, "dat dese people are desperate. If dey intend to murder a voman dey vould certainly not stick at a man or two men. You have no knowledge of how many dere may be. Dere is certainly Herr Girdlestone and his son and de man mit de eye, but madame does not know how many may be at de house. Remember also dat de police are not on your side, but rather against you, for as yet dere is no evidence dat any crime is intentioned. Ven you think of all dis I am sure dat you vill agree mit me dat it vould be vell to take mit you two or tree men dat vould stick by you through thin and broad."

The major was so busy in making his preparations for departure that he could only signify by a nod that he agreed with his friend's remarks. "What men could I git?" he asked.

"Dere is I myself," said the German, counting upon his big red fingers, "and dere are some of our society who vould very gladly come on such an errand, and are men who are altogether to be relied upon. Dere is little Fritz Bulow, of Kiel, and a Russian man whose name I disremember, but he is a good man. He was a Nihilist at Odessa, and is sentenced to death suppose dey could him catch. Dere are others as good, but it might take me time to find dem. Dese two I can very easily get. Dey are living together, and have neither of dem nothing to do."

"Bring them then," said the major. "Git a cab and run them down to Waterloo Station. That's the one for Bedsworth. I'll bring Dimsdale down with me and meet you there. In me opinion there's no time to be lost."

The major was ready to start, so Von Baumser threw on his coat and hat, and picked out a thick stick from a rack in the corner. "We may need something of de sort," he said.

"I have me derringer," the soldier answered. They left the house together, and Von Baumser drove off to the East End, where his political friends resided. The major called a cab and rattled away to Phillimore Gardens and thence to the office, without being able to find the man of whom he was in search. He then rushed down the Strand as quickly as he could, intending to catch the next train and go alone, but on his way to Waterloo Station he fell in with Tom Dimsdale.

The letter was a thunderbolt to Tom. In his worst dreams he had never imagined anything so dark as this. He hurried back to the station at such a pace that the poor major was reduced to a most asthmatical and wheezy condition. He trotted along pluckily, however, and as he went heard the account of Tom's adventures in the morning, and of the departure of Ezra Girdlestone and of his red-bearded companion. The major's face grew more anxious still when he heard of it. "Pray God we may not be too late!" he panted.

Kate has a Letter.

As the light faded and the gray of evening deepened into darkness Kate sat patiently in her bare little room. A coal fire sputtered and sparkled in the rusty grate, and there was a

tin bucket full of coals beside the fender from which to replenish it. She was very cold, so she drew her single chair up to the blaze and held her hands over it. It was a lonesome and melancholy vigil, while the wind whistled through the branches of the trees and moaned drearily in the cracks and crannies of the old house. When were her friends coming? Perhaps something had occurred to detain them to-day. This morning such a thing would have appeared to her to be an impossibility, but now that the time had come when she had expected them, it appeared probable enough that something might have delayed them. To-morrow at latest they could not fail to come. She wondered what they would do if they did arrive. Would they come boldly up the avenue and claim her from the Girdlestones, or would they endeavor to communicate with her first? Whatever they decided upon would be sure to be for the best.

She went to the window once and looked out. It promised to be a wild night. Far away in the southwest lay a great cumulus of rugged clouds from which dark streamers radiated over the sky, like the advance guard of an army. Here and there a pale star twinkled dimly out through the rifts, but the greater part of the heavens was black and threatening. It was so dark that she could no longer see the sea, but the crashing, booming sound of the great waves filled the air and the salt spray came driving in through the open window. She shut it and resumed her seat by the fire, shivering partly from cold and partly from some vague presentiment of evil.

An hour or more had passed when she heard a step upon the stairs and a knock came to her door. It was Rebecca, with a cup of tea upon a tray and some bread and butter. Kate was grateful at this attention, for it saved her from having to go down to the dining room and face Ezra and his unpleasant-looking companion. Rebecca laid down the tray, and then to her mistress' surprise turned back and shut the door. The girl's face was very pale, and her manner was wild and excited.

"Here's a note for you," she said. "It was given Mrs. Jorrocks to give you, but I am better at climbing stairs than she is, so I brought it up." She handed Kate a little slip of paper as she spoke.

A note for her! Could it be that her friends had arrived and had managed to send a message to her? It must be so. She took it from the maid. As she did so she noticed that her hands were shaking as though she had the ague.

"You are not well, Rebecca," said Kate, kindly.

"Oh, yes, I am. You read your note and don't mind me," the girl answered in her usual surly fashion. Instead of leaving the room she was bustling about the bed as though putting things in order. Kate's impatience was too great to allow her to wait, so she untwisted the paper, which had no seal or fastening. She had hoped in her heart to see the name of her lover at the end of it. Instead of that her eye fell upon the signature of Ezra Girdlestone. What could he have to say to her? She moved the solitary candle on to the mantelpiece, and read the following note roughly scribbled upon a coarse piece of paper: —

MY DEAR MISS HARSTON, — I am afraid your confinement here has been very irksome to you. I have repeatedly requested my father to alleviate or modify it, but he has invariably refused. As he still persists in his refusal, I wish to offer you my aid, and to show you that I am your sincere friend in spite of all that has passed, if you could slip out to-night at nine o'clock and meet me by the withered oak at the head of the avenue, I shall see you safe to Bedsworth, and you can, if you wish, go on to Portsmouth by the next train. I shall manage so that you may find the door open by that time. I shall not, of course, go to Portsmouth with you, but shall return here after dropping you at the station. I do this small thing to show you that, hopeless as it may be, the affection which I bear you is still as deep as ever.

Yours, E. GIRDLESTONE.

Our heroine was so surprised at this epistle that she sat for some time dangling the slip of paper between her fingers and lost in thought. When she glanced round, Rebecca had left the room. She rolled the paper up and threw it into the fire. Ezra, then, was not so hard-hearted as she had thought him. He had used his influence to soften his father. Should she accept this chance of escape, or should she await some word from her friends! Perhaps they were already in Bedsworth, but did not know how to communicate with her. If so, this offer of Ezra's was just what was needed. In any case, she could go on to Portsmouth and telegraph from there to the Dimsdales. It was too good an offer to be refused. She made up her mind that she would accept it. It was past eight now and nine was the hour. She stood up with the intention of putting on her cloak and her bonnet.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

This conversation with Rebecca had suggested to Ezra that he might still have influence enough with his father's ward to induce her to come out of doors, and so put herself within the reach of Burt. He had proposed the plan to his father, who approved of it heartily. The only weak point in his scheme had been the difficulty which might arise in inducing the girl to venture out of the Priory on that tempestuous winter's night. There was evidently only one incentive strong enough to bring it about, and that was the hope of escape. By harping skillfully upon this string they might lure her into the trap. Ezra and his father composed the letter together, and the former handed it to Mrs. Jorrocks, with a request that she should deliver it.

It chanced, however, that Rebecca, keenly alive to any attempt at communication between the young merchant and mistress, saw the crone hobbling down the passage with the note in her hand.

"What's that, mother?" she asked.

"It's a letter for her," wheezed the old woman, nodding her tremulous head in the direction of Kate's room.

"I'll take it up," said Rebecca, eagerly. "I am just going up there with her tea."

"Thank ye. Them stairs tries my rheumatiz something cruel."

The maid took the note and carried it upstairs. Instead of taking it straight to her mistress she slipped into her own room and read every word of it. It appeared to confirm her worst suspicions. Here was Ezra asking an interview with the woman whom he had assured her that he hated. It was true that the request was made in measured words and on a plausible pretext. No doubt that was merely to deceive any other eye which might rest upon it. There was an understanding between them, and this was an assignation. The girl walked swiftly up and down the room like a caged tigress, striking her head with her clenched hands in her anger, and biting her lip until blood came. It was some time before she could overcome her agitation sufficiently to deliver the note, and when she did so her mistress, as we have seen, noticed that her manner was nervous and wild. She little dreamed of the struggle which was going on in the dark-eyed girl's mind against the impulse which urged her to seize

her imagined rival by the white throat and choke the life out of her.

THE MURDER.

Burt crouched down behind the withered oak with his weapon in his hand and waited for the coming of his victim.

Ezra, though usually resolute and daring, had completely lost his nerve, and his teeth were chattering in his head. His father, on the other hand, was as emotionless and impassive as ever.

"It's close upon nine o'clock," Ezra whispered.

"Ten minutes to," said the other, peering at his great golden chronometer through the darkness.

"What if she fails to come?"

"We must devise other means of bringing her out."

From the spot where they stood they had a view of the whole of the Priory. She could not come out without being seen. Above the door was a long narrow window which opened upon the staircase. On this Girdlestone and his son fixed their eyes, for they knew that on her way down she would be visible at it. As they looked, the dim light which shone through it was obscured and then reappeared.

"She has passed!"

"Hush!"

Another moment and the door was stealthily opened. Once again the broad golden bar shot out across the lawn almost to the spot where the confederates were crouching. In the center of the zone of light there stood a figure—the figure of the girl. Even at that distance they could distinguish the pearl-gray mantle which she usually wore and the close-fitting bonnet. She had wrapped a shawl round the lower part of her face to protect her from the boisterous wind. For a minute or more she stood peering out into the darkness of the night, as though uncertain whether to proceed or to go back. Then, with a quick, sudden gesture she closed the door behind her. The light was no longer there, but they knew that she was outside the house, and that the appointment would be kept.

What an age it seemed before they heard her footsteps. She came very slowly, putting one foot gingerly before the other, as if afraid of falling over something in the darkness. Once or twice she stopped altogether, looking round, no doubt, to make sure of her whereabouts. At the instant the moon

shone out from behind a cloud, and they saw her dark figure a short distance off. The light enabled her to see the withered oak, for she came rapidly towards it. As she approached she satisfied herself apparently that she was the first on the ground, for she slackened her pace once more and walked in the listless way that people assume when they are waiting. The clouds were overtaking the moon again, and the light was getting dimmer.

"I can see her still," said Ezra, in a whisper, grasping his father's wrist in his excitement.

The old man said nothing, but he peered through the darkness with eager, straining eyes.

"There she is, standing out a little from the oak," the young merchant said, pointing with a quivering finger. "She's not near enough for him to reach her."

"He's coming out from the shadow now," the other said huskily. "Don't you see him crawling along the ground?"

"I see him," returned the other in the same subdued, awe-struck voice. "Now he has stopped; now he goes on again! My God, he's close behind her! She is looking the other way."

A thin ray of light shot down between the clouds. In its silvery radiance two figures stood out hard and black, that of the unconscious girl and of the man who crouched like a beast of prey behind her. He made a step forward, which brought him within a yard of her. She may have heard the heavy footfall above the shriek of the storm, for she turned suddenly and faced him. At the same instant she was struck down with a crashing blow. There was no time for a prayer, no time for a scream. One moment had seen her a magnificent woman in all the pride of her youthful beauty, the next left her a poor battered senseless wreck. The navvy had earned his blood money.

At the sound of the blow and the sight of the fall both the old man and the young ran out from their place of concealment. Burt was standing over the body, his bludgeon in his hand.

"Not even a groan!" he said. "What d'ye think of that?"

Girdlestone wrung his hand and congratulated him warmly. "Shall I light the lantern?" he asked.

"For God's sake, don't!" Ezra said earnestly.

"I had no idea that you were so faint-hearted, my son," the merchant remarked. "However, I know the way to the gate well enough to go there blindfold. What a comfort it is to know that there is no blood about! That's the advantage of a stick over a knife."

"You're correct there, guv'nor," Burt said, approvingly.

"Will you kindly carry one end and I'll take the other. I'll go first, if you don't mind, because I know the way best. The train will pass in less than half an hour, so we have not long to wait. Within that time every chance of detection will have gone."

Girdlestone raised up the head of the murdered girl, and Burt took her feet. Ezra walked behind as though he were in some dreadful dream. He had fully recognized the necessity for the murder, but he had never before realized how ghastly the details would be. Already he had begun to repent that he had ever acquiesced in it. Then came thoughts of the splendid possibilities of the African business, which could only be saved from destruction by this woman's death. How could he, with his luxurious tastes, bear the squalor and poverty which would be his lot were the firm to fail! Better a rope and a long drop than such a life as that! All these considerations thronged into his mind as he plodded along the slippery footpath which led through the forest to the wooden gate.

The Invasion of Hampshire.

When Tom and the major arrived at Waterloo Station, the latter in the breathless condition described in a preceding chapter, they found the German waiting for them with his two fellow-exiles. The gentleman of Nihilistic proclivities was somewhat tall and thin, with a long frock coat buttoned almost up to his throat, which showed signs of giving at the seams every here and there. His grizzly hair fell over his collar behind, and he had a short bristling beard. He stood with one hand stuck into the front of his coat and the other upon his hip, as though rehearsing the position in which his statue would be some day erected in the streets of his native Russia, when the people had their own, and despotism was no more. In spite of his worn attire there was something noble and striking about the man. His bow, when Baumser introduced him to the major and Tom, would have graced any Court in

Europe. Round his neck he had a coarse string from which hung a pair of double eyeglasses. These he fixed upon his aquiline nose, and took a good look at the gentlemen whom he had come to serve.

Bulow, of Kiel, was a small, dark-eyed, clean-shaven fellow, quick and energetic in his movements, having more the appearance of a Celt than of a Teuton. He seemed to be full of amiability, and assured the major in execrable English how very happy he was to be able to do a service to one who had shown kindness to their esteemed colleague and persecuted patriot, Von Baumser. Indeed both of the men showed great deference to the German, and the major began to perceive that his friend was a very exalted individual in Socialistic circles. He liked the look of the two foreigners, and congratulated himself upon having their cooperation in the matter on hand.

Ill luck was in store for the expedition, however. On inquiry at the ticket office they found that there was no train for upwards of two hours, and then it was a slow one, which would not land them until eight o'clock at Bedsworth. At this piece of information Tom Dimsdale fairly broke down, and stamped about the station, raving and beseeching the officials to run a special, be the cost what it might. This, however, could by no means be done, owing to the press of Saturday traffic. There was nothing for it but to wait. The three foreigners went off in search of something to eat, and having found a convenient cookshop they disappeared therein and feasted royally at Von Baumser's expense. Major Tobias Clutterbuck remained with the young man, who resolutely refused to leave the platform. The major knew of a snug little corner not far off where he could have put in the time very comfortably, but he could not bring himself to desert his companion even for a minute. I have no doubt that that wait of two hours in the draughty station is marked up somewhere to the old sinner's credit account.

Indeed, it was well that day that young Dimsdale had good friends at his back. His appearance was so strange and wild that the passers-by turned back to have another look at him. His eyes were open and staring, giving a fear-inspiring character to his expression. He could not sit still for an instant, but paced up and down and backwards and forwards under the influence of the fierce energy which consumed him, while the major plodded along manfully at his side, suggesting every con-

sideration which might cheer him up, and narrating many tales, true and apocryphal, most of which fell upon heedless ears. . . .

It was nearly eight o'clock by the time they reached their destination. The station master directed them to the Flying Bull, where they secured the very vehicle in which Kate and her guardian had been originally driven up. By the time that the horse was put in it was close on to the half-hour.

"Drive as hard as you can go to the Priory, me man," said the major.

The sulky hostler made no remark, but a look of surprise passed over his phlegmatic countenance. For years back so little had been heard of the old monastery that its very existence had been almost forgotten in Bedsworth. Now, whole troops of Londoners were coming down in succession, demanding to be driven there. He pondered over the strange facts as he drove through the darkness, but the only conclusion to which his bucolic mind could come was that it was high time to raise the fare to that particular point.

It was a miserable night, stormy and wet and bitterly cold. None of the five men had a thought to spare for the weather, however. The two foreigners had been so infected by the suppressed excitement of their companions, or had so identified themselves with their comrades' cause, that they were as eager as the others.

"Are we near?" the major asked.

"The gate is just at the end o' the lane, sir."

"Don't pull up at the gate, but take us a little past it."

"There ain't no way in except the gate," the driver remarked.

"Do what you're ordered," said the major, sternly.

Once again the hostler's face betrayed unbounded astonishment. He slewed halfway round in his seat and took as good a look as was possible in the uncertain light at the faces of his passengers. It had occurred to him that it was more than likely that he would have to swear to them at some future date in a police court. "I'd know that thick 'un wi' the red face," he muttered to himself, "and him wi' the yeller beard and the stick."

They passed the stone pillars with the weather-beaten heraldic devices, and drove along by the high park wall. When they had gone a hundred yards or so the major ordered the driver to pull up, and they all got down. The increased fare

was paid without remonstrance, and the hostler rattled away homewards, with the intention of pulling up at the county police station and lodging information as to the suspicious visitors whom he had brought down.

"It is loikely that they have a watch at the gate," said the major. "We must keep away from there. This wall is a great hoight. We'd best keep on until we find the aisiest place to scale it."

"I could get over it here," Tom said eagerly.

"Wait a bit. A few minutes can make no difference one way or the other. Ould Sir Colin used to say that there were more battles lost by overhaste than by slowness. What's the high bank running along on the right here?"

"Dat's a railway bankment," said Von Baumser. "See the posts and the little red lights over yonder."

"So it is. The wall seems to me to be lower here. What's this dark thing? Hullo, here's a door lading into the grounds."

"It is locked, though."

"Give me a hoist," Tom said imploringly. "Don't throw a minute away. You can't tell what may be going on inside. At this very moment for all we know they may be plotting her murder."

"He has right," said Von Baumser. "We shall await here until we hear from you. Help him, my vriends—shove him up!"

Tom caught the coping of the wall, although the broken glass upon the top cut deeply into his hands. With a great heave he swung himself up, and was soon astride upon the top.

"Here's the whistle," said the major, standing on tiptoe to reach a down-stretched hand. "If you want us give a good blow at it. We'll be with you in a brace of shakes. If we can't get over the wall we'll have the door down. Divil a fear but we'll be there!"

Tom was in the act of letting himself drop into the wood, when suddenly the watchers below saw him crouch down upon the wall, and lie motionless as though listening intently.

"Hush!" he whispered, leaning over. "Some one is coming through the wood."

The wind had died away and the storm subsided. Even from the lane they could hear the sound of feet, and of muffled voices inside the grounds. They all crouched down in the shadow of the wall. Tom lay flat upon the glass-studded cop-

ing, and no one looking from below could distinguish him from the wall itself.

The voices and the footsteps sounded louder and louder, until they were just at the other side of the boundary. They seemed to come from several people walking slowly and heavily. There was the shrill rasping of a key and the wooden door swung back on its rusty hinges, while three dark figures passed out who appeared to bear some burden between them. The party in the shadow crouched closer still, and peered through the darkness with eager anxious eyes. They could discern little save the vague outlines of the moving men, and yet as they gazed at them an unaccountable and overpowering horror crept into the hearts of every one of them. They breathed an atmosphere of death.

The newcomers tramped across the road, and pushing through the thin hedge, ascended the railway embankment upon the other side. It was evident that their burden was a heavy one, for they stopped more than once while ascending the steep grassy slope, and once, when near the top, one of the party slipped, and there was a sound as though he had fallen upon his knees, together with a stifled oath. They reached the top, however, and their figures, which had disappeared from view, came into sight again standing out dimly against the murky sky. They bent down over the railway line, and placed the indistinguishable mass which they bore carefully upon it.

"We must have the light," said a voice.

"No, no; there's no need," another expostulated.

"We can't work in the dark," said a third, loudly and harshly. "Where's your lantern, guv'nor? I've got a lucifer."

"We must manage that the train passes over right," the first voice remarked. "Here, Burt, you light it."

There was the sharp sound of the striking of a match, and a feeble glimmer appeared in the darkness. It flickered and waned, as though the wind would extinguish it, but next instant the wick of the lantern had caught, and threw a strong yellow glare upon the scene. The light fell upon the major and his comrades, who had sprung into the road, and it lit up the group on the railway line. Yet it was not upon the rescuing party that the murderers fixed their terror-stricken eyes, and the major and his friends had lost all thought of the miscreants above them — for there standing in the center of the roadway, there with the light flickering over her pale sweet face, like a

spirit from the tomb, stood none other than the much-enduring, cruelly treated girl for whom Burt's murderous blow had been intended.

For a few moments she stood there without either party moving a foot or uttering a sound. Then there came from the railway line a cry so wild that it will ring forever in the ears of those who heard it. Burt dropped upon his knees and put his hand over his eyes to keep out the sight. John Girdlestone caught his son by the wrist and dashed away into the darkness, flying wildly, madly, with white faces and staring eyes, as men who have looked upon that which is not of this world. In the mean time, Tom had sprung down from his perch, and had clasped Kate in his arms, and there she lay, sobbing and laughing, with many pretty feminine ejaculations and exclamations and questions, saved at last from the net of death, which had been closing upon her so long.



THE OLIVE BOUGHS.

By SARAH FLOWER ADAMS.

THEY bear the hero from the fight, dying;
But the foe is flying:
They lay him down beneath the shade
By the olive branches made:
The olive boughs are sighing.

He hears the wind among the leaves, dying;
But the foe is flying:
He hears the voice that used to be
When he sat beneath the tree:
The olive boughs are sighing.

Comes the mist around his brow, dying;
But the foe is flying:
Comes that form of peace so fair, —
Stretch his hands unto the air.
The olive boughs are sighing.

Fadeth life as fadeth day, dying;
But the foe is flying:
There's an urn beneath the shade
By the olive branches made:
The olive boughs are sighing.

THE GLORY OF THE IMPERFECT.

By G. H. PALMER

[GEORGE H. PALMER, born in 1842, is Professor of Moral Philosophy at Harvard. He is author of "The New Education," and a translation of the "Odyssey"]

THOUGH I have discussed the joy in perfecting, as is the habit of us metaphysicians, in dry and abstract fashion, I still want people to see that it is an extremely practical matter. In which direction are you going to seek the interests of your life? Are you going to demand that the things about you shall already possess their perfection? Are you going to demand from life that it shall be completed, finished, beautiful? If so, you are doomed to unhappy days. You are certain of disappointment. Or are you going to get your intellectual eyes open and see beauty in the making, and come to rejoice in it there, rather than after it is made? This is the question I want to present to you, dear reader, and I shall ask you to accompany me as we pass several of the provinces of life in survey, so that you may see how different they appear when surveyed from one of these points of view or from the other.

Are ex-students going to feel: "Ah! home is a dull place; I wish I were back in college again. I think I was made for college life. Possibly enough I was made for wealthy life; I am sure I was made for a comfortable life; and I do not find these things here. I will sit and wish I had them. Of course I ought not to rejoice in a home that is short of perfection, and I recognize that this is a good way from that"? Is this going to be their attitude? Or are they going to say: "How interesting this home! What an excellent struggle the dear people are making with the resources at their command! What kindness is shown by my tired mother; how ready to find out the many little wants of the household is she! How diligent my father! Should I, if I had only their narrow opportunities, be as intelligent, as kind, as self-sacrificing as they? What can I do to show them my gratitude? What can I contribute toward the furtherance, the enlargement, the perfecting of this home?" And, I ask, are they going to enter into this home not as a matter of loving duty, but are they going to find it interesting?

Are they going to say: "This home is not a perfect home, happily not a perfect home. I have something to do here. It is far more interesting than if it were already complete"?

I maintain, therefore, in regard to our land as a whole, that there is no land so interesting on the face of the earth; and I maintain this through the very reasoning which brought Mr. Arnold to a contrary opinion. I accept his judgment of the beauty of America. I accept his premise; but I read his conclusion in just the opposite way. In America we still are making; and that is why America, beyond any other country, awakens a noble interest. The beauty which I find in the old lands, and which is refreshing to me for a season, is after all a species of death. Those who dwell among such scenes are appeased; they are not quickened. Let them take their past; we have our future. We may do much; what they can do is largely ended.

In literature, I wish to bring these distinctions before my readers, these differences of standard, and perhaps for this purpose I cannot do better than give a few verses from the poet of the imperfect. I suppose if we were to try to mark out with precision the work of Mr. Browning—I mean not to mark it out as the Browning societies do, but to mark it out with precision—we might say that the distinctive feature of his work is that he has perceived the principle of which I am speaking; he has sought for beauty where there is seeming chaos; he has loved growth, has prized progress, has noted the advance of the spiritual, the pressing on of the finite soul through hindrance to its junction with the infinite. That it is which inspired his somewhat crabbed verses, and has made men willing to undergo the labor of reading them that they too may partake of his insight. In one of his poems—one which seems to me to contain some of his sublimest as well as some of his most commonplace lines, the poem on "Old Pictures in Florence"—he discriminates between the Greek and Christian art in much the same way I have done. I read you a few verses, that they may sum up the thoughts I have given you before I pass on.

"In Greek art," Mr. Browning says:—

You saw yourself as you wished you were,
  As you might have been, as you cannot be;
Earth here, rebuked by Olympus there;
  And grew content in your poor degree

With your little power, by those statues' godhead;
  And your little scope, by their eyes' full sway;
And your little grace, by their grace embodied,
  And your little date, by their forms that stay.

You would fain be kinglier, say, than I am?
  Even so, you will not sit like Theseus.
You would prove a model? The son of Priam
  Has yet the advantage in arms' and knees' use.
You're wroth; can you slay your snake like Apollo?
  You're grieved; still Niobe's the grander!
You live; there's the Racers' frieze to follow:
  You die; there's the dying Alexander.

So testing your weakness by their strength,
  Your meager charms by their rounded beauty,
Measured by art in your breadth and length,
  You learned. To submit is a mortal's duty

Growth came when, looking your last on them all,
  You turned your eyes inwardly one fine day
And cried with a start· What if we so small
  Be greater and grander the while than they!
Are they perfect of lineament, perfect of stature?
  In both, of such lower types are we
Precisely because of our wider nature;
  For time, theirs — ours, for eternity.

To-day's brief passion limits their range;
  It seethes with the morrow for us, and more
They are perfect — how else? they shall never change;
  We are faulty — why not? we have time in store.
The Artificer's hand is not arrested
  With us; we are rough-hewn, nowise polished:
They stand for our copy, and, once invested
  With all they can teach, we shall see them abolished.

My readers will notice that in this subtle study Mr. Browning points out how, through the comprehension of perfection, there comes content with our present lot. That I call the danger of perfection, the danger of comprehending beauty. For in the lives of all of you there should be a divine discontent; not devilish discontent, but divine discontent — a recognition that life may be larger than you have yet attained, that

you are to press beyond what you have reached, that joy lies in the future, in that which has not been found, rather than in the present, which has already been grasped. And it seems to me, if ever a people were called on to understand this glory of the imperfect, it is we of America.

If, then, the modes of accepting the passion for perfection are so contrasted as I have pointed out, it is possible to indicate methods by which men may discipline themselves in the nobler way of seeking the interest of life,—I mean by taking part with things in their beginnings, learning to reverence them there, and so finding an interest perpetually supported and carried forward. They may well look with some anxiety upon the doctrine which I have laid down.

I will reduce what I have to say to three rules, and the first rule shall be—observe! A simple matter—one, I dare say, which it will seem difficult not to follow. People have a pair of eyes; how can they fail to observe? Ah, but eyes can only look; that is not observing. They want to observe, not to look only. They want to penetrate into things, to find out what is there. There is nothing on earth which, when observed, is not of enormous interest. They cannot find anything so destitute of the principles of life that, when they come to study it, it will not disclose those principles. But it makes all the difference whether they do thus observe, whether they are willing to hold their attention to the thing in hand and see what it contains. After puzzling long about the charm of Homer, I once applied to a learned friend and said to him: "Can you tell me why Homer is so interesting? Why can't you and I write as he wrote? Why is it that his art was lost with him, and that to-day it is impossible for us to quicken such interest as he?" "Well," said my friend, "I have meditated on that a great deal, but it seems to me it comes to about this: Homer looked long at a thing. Why," said he, "do you know that if you should hold up your thumb and look at it long enough, you would find it immensely interesting?" Homer looks a great while at his thumb; he sees precisely the thing he is dealing with. He does not confuse it with anything else. It is sharp to him; and because it is sharp to him it stands out sharply for us over all these thousands of years. Have men acquired that art? Do they see the thing exactly as it is? Do they strip away from it their own likings and dislikings, their own previous notions of what it ought to be?

Do they come face to face with things? If they do, I am sure the hardest situation in life will be to them a delight. They will not be interested in its hardships, but in its opportunities. Possibly they will feel: "Yes, here are just the difficulties I delight to throw myself into. How can one be interested in easy things? The hard things of life are the ones for which we ought to give thanks." Why, the things on which we have thus concentrated attention become our interests. For example, unluckily when I was trained I was not disciplined in botany. I cannot observe the rose. I have to look stupidly upon the total beauty of this lovely object; I can see it only as a whole: fine observers who have trained their powers to penetrate into it can go to its very structure and can see how exquisitely the blooming thing is put together. My eyes were dulled to that long ago; I cannot observe it. Beware, my readers, do not let yourselves grow dull. Observe, observe, observe in every direction! Keep your eyes open. Go forward, understanding that the world was made for your knowledge; that you are to enter into it and possess it.

And the second rule grows directly out of this one. It is: Sympathize with that which lies beyond you; sympathize, I say, with that which lies beyond you. It is easy to sympathize with that which lies within you. How many persons there are who pass through life sympathizing with themselves all the time! What unhappy persons! how unfit for anything whatever! They are full of themselves, and answer their own motion. But there beyond them lies all the beautiful world, in which they might have a share. For sympathy is feeling with; it is identifying yourself with that which at present is not yourself; it is claiming your own. It is going forth and joining yourself with many, not standing off and merely observing, as I said at first. When we observe, the object we observe is different from us; when we sympathize, we identify ourselves with it. You may go into your home and observe, and you will make every person in that home wretched. But go into a home and sympathize with it, find out what lies beyond you there, see how differently those persons are thinking and feeling from the ways in which you are accustomed to think and feel, and yet see how their modes of thinking and feeling supplement your own, that you are imperfect as you stand, and that it is necessary that persons should be constituted thus different from yourself if even your own completion is to

come; then, I say, you will soon become large in yourself, and a large benefactor to others. Do not stunt sympathy; do not allow walls to rise up and shut you around. Never say to yourself: "This is my way; I don't do so and so. I know only this and that; I don't want to know anything else. Oh, yes; you other people can have that habit, but these are my habits, and I always do thus and thus." Don't say that. There is nothing more immoral than moral psychology. You ought to have no interest in yourself as you stand, because a larger selfhood lies beyond you, and you should be going forth and claiming your heritage there. Don't stand apart from the movements of the country, the political movements, however distastefully they may strike you. Identify yourself with them, always have a noble side; seek it out and claim it as your own. Throw yourself into all life, and make it noble.

But I am afraid it would be impossible for people thus to observe, thus to sympathize, unless, thirdly, they bring within themselves some grounds of self-respect. They must bring to things if they would draw from things. They must already have acqured some sort of excellence in order to detect a larger excellence. They must have something which they can do, and do on the whole better than anybody else can do it. That is the moral aspect of competition, that one person can do a certain thing best, and so it is given him to do. The world is already full; it has no place for some people, it never thought about their coming into it, and it has provided no corner for them. The only way they will find a corner will be by doing something better than the people who are already there. Then they will make a place for themselves. Now, that is what you, young reader, ought to be devoting yourself to; you ought to be training yourself to do something well, it really does not matter much what it is. Can you make dresses well? Can you cook a good loaf of bread? Can you write a poem? Can you run a typewriter? Can you do anything well? Are you a master somewhere? If you are, the world will have a place for you; and, more than that, you will have grounds to respect yourself. Indeed, what I have been saying is that the imperfect thing is only worthy to be respected in its connection with all the rest of life. Let not the college man say to himself when he goes out: "I know Greek; that is a splendid thing to know: these people whom I am meeting do not know it, and obviously they are of a lower grade than I."

That will not be self-respectful, because it shows that he has not understood his proper place. This wide world is one's larger self. It is not too extravagant an expression. But if we are so to count it, then we must count that particular thing which we are capable of doing as merely our special contribution to the great self. And we must understand that many are making similar contributions. What I want people to feel, therefore, is that splendid conception of mutual helpfulness which St. Paul has set forth, where each of us is performing a special function in the common life, and that life of all is recognized as the divine life, the manifestation of the life of our Father. When they have come to that point, when they have seen in the imperfect a portion, an aspect, of the total, perfect, divine life, then I am not afraid life will be uninteresting to them. When man will have acquired the art of penetrating into the imperfect and finding in limited, finite life the infinite life, then all things will be interesting to them. "To apprehend thus," Shakespeare tells us, in his own exact fashion,

To apprehend thus draws us a profit from all things we see.



THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES.

By CHARLES LAMB.

I have had playmates, I have had companions
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghostlike I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

How some they have died, and some they have left me
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.



THE POWER OF THE WILD ASS' SKIN.[1]

By HONORÉ DE BALZAC.

(From "La Peau de Chagrin.")

[For biographical sketch, see page 7817.]

"AND now for death!" cried the young man, awakened from his musings. His last thought had recalled his fate to him, as it led him imperceptibly back from the forlorn hopes to which he had clung.

"Ah, ha! then my suspicions were well founded!" said the other, and his hands held the young man's wrists in a grip like that of a vise.

The young man smiled wearily at his mistake, and said gently: —

"You, sir, have nothing to fear; it is not your life, but my own that is in question. . . . But why should I hide a harmless fraud?" he went on, after a look at the anxious old man. "I came to see your treasures, to while away the time till night should come and I could drown myself decently. Who would grudge this last pleasure to a poet and a man of science?"

While he spoke, the jealous merchant watched the haggard face of his pretended customer with keen eyes. Perhaps the mournful tones of his voice reassured him, or he also read the dark signs of fate in the faded features that had made the gamblers shudder; he released his hands, but, with a touch of caution, due to the experience of some hundred years at least, he stretched his arm out to a sideboard as if to steady himself, took up a little dagger, and said: —

"Have you been a supernumerary clerk of the Treasury for three years without receiving any perquisites?"

[1] By permission of J. M. Dent & Co.

The stranger could scarcely suppress a smile as he shook his head.

"Perhaps your father has expressed his regret for your birth a little too sharply? Or have you disgraced yourself?"

"If I meant to be disgraced I should live."

"You have been hissed perhaps at the Funambules? Or you have had to compose couplets to pay for your mistress' funeral? Do you want to be cured of the gold fever? Or to be quit of the spleen? For what blunder is your life a forfeit?"

"You must not look among the common motives that impel suicides for the reason of my death. To spare myself the task of disclosing my unheard-of sufferings, for which language has no name, I will tell you this—that I am in the deepest, most humiliating, and most cruel trouble, and," he went on in proud tones that harmonized ill with the words just uttered, "I have no wish to beg for either help or sympathy."

"Eh! eh!"

The two syllables which the old man pronounced resembled the sound of a rattle. Then he went on thus:—

"Without compelling you to entreat me, without making you blush for it, and without giving you so much as a French centime, a para from the Levant, a German heller, a Russian kopeck, a Scottish farthing, a single obolus or sestercius from the ancient world, or one piaster from the new, without offering you anything whatever in gold, silver or copper, notes or drafts, I will make you richer, more powerful, and of more consequence than a constitutional king."

The younger man thought that the older was in his dotage, and waited in bewilderment without venturing to reply.

"Turn round," said the merchant, suddenly catching up the lamp in order to light up the opposite wall; "look at that leathern skin," he went on.

The young man rose abruptly, and showed some surprise at the sight of a piece of shagreen which hung on the wall behind his chair. It was only about the size of a fox's skin, but it seemed to fill the deep shadows of the place with such brilliant rays that it looked like a small comet, an appearance at first sight inexplicable. The young skeptic went up to this so-called talisman, which was to rescue him from his woes, with a scoffing phrase in his thoughts. Still a harmless curiosity led him to bend over it and look at it from all points of view, and he soon found out the cause of its singular brilliancy.

The dark grain of the leather had been so carefully burnished and polished, the striped markings of the graining were so sharp and clear, that every particle of the surface of the bit of Oriental leather was in itself a focus which concentrated the light, and reflected it vividly.

He accounted for this phenomenon categorically to the old man, who only smiled meaningly by way of answer. His superior smile led the young scientific man to fancy that he himself had been deceived by some imposture. He had no wish to carry one more puzzle to his grave, and hastily turned the skin over, like some child eager to find out the mysteries of a new toy.

"Ah," he cried, "here is the mark of the seal which they call in the East the Signet of Solomon."

"So you know that, then?" asked the merchant. His peculiar method of laughter, two or three quick breathings through the nostrils, said more than any words, however eloquent.

"Is there anybody in the world simple enough to believe in that idle fancy?" said the young man, nettled by the spitefulness of the silent chuckle. "Don't you know," he continued, "that the superstitions of the East have perpetuated the mystical form and the counterfeit characters of the symbol, which represents a mythical dominion? I have no more laid myself open to a charge of credulity in this case than if I had mentioned sphinxes or griffins, whose existence mythology in a manner admits."

"As you are an Orientalist," replied the other, "perhaps you can read that sentence."

He held the lamp close to the talisman, which the young man held toward him, and pointed out some characters inlaid in the surface of the wonderful skin, as if they had grown on the animal to which it once belonged.

"I must admit," said the stranger, "that I have no idea how the letters could be engraved so deeply on the skin of a wild ass." And he turned quickly to the tables strewn with curiosities, and seemed to look for something.

"What is it that you want?" asked the old man.

"Something that will cut the leather, so that I can see whether the letters are printed or inlaid."

The old man held out his stiletto. The stranger took it and tried to cut the skin above the lettering; but when he had

removed a thin shaving of leather from them, the characters still appeared below, so clear and so exactly like the surface impression, that for a moment he was not sure that he had cut anything away after all.

"The craftsmen of the Levant have secrets known only to themselves," he said, half in vexation, as he eyed the characters of this Oriental sentence.

"Yes," said the old man, "it is better to attribute it to man's agency than to God's."

The mysterious words were thus arranged, as it runs in English: —

POSSESSING ME THOU SHALT POSSESS ALL THINGS.
BUT THY LIFE IS MINE, FOR GOD HAS SO WILLED IT.
WISH, AND THY WISHES SHALL BE FULFILLED;
BUT MEASURE THY DESIRES, ACCORDING
TO THE LIFE THAT IS IN THEE.
THIS IS THY LIFE,
WITH EACH WISH I MUST SHRINK
EVEN AS THY OWN DAYS.
WILT THOU HAVE ME? TAKE ME.
GOD WILL HEARKEN UNTO THEE.
SO BE IT!

"So you read Sanskrit fluently," said the old man. "You have been in Persia, perhaps, or in Bengal?"

"No, sir," said the stranger, as he felt the emblematical skin curiously. It was almost as rigid as a sheet of metal.

The old merchant set the lamp back again upon the column, giving the other a look as he did so. "He has given up the notion of dying already," the glance said with phlegmatic irony.

"Is it a jest, or is it an enigma?" asked the young man.

The other shook his head and said soberly: —

"I don't know how to answer you. I have offered this talisman with its terrible powers to men with more energy in them than you seem to me to have; but though they laughed at the questionable power it might exert over their futures, not one of them was ready to venture to conclude the fateful contract proposed by an unknown force. I am of their opinion, I have doubted and refrained, and ——"

"Have you never even tried its power?" interrupted the young stranger.

"Tried it!" exclaimed the old man. "Suppose that you

were on the column in the Place Vendôme, would you try flinging yourself into space? Is it possible to stay the course of life? Has a man ever been known to die by halves? Before you came here, you had made up your mind to kill yourself, but all at once a mystery fills your mind, and you think no more about death. You child! Does not any one day of your life afford mysteries more absorbing? Listen to me. I saw the licentious days of the Regency. I was like you then, in poverty; I have begged my bread; but for all that, I am now a centenarian with a couple of years to spare, and a millionaire to boot. Misery was the making of me, ignorance has made me learned. I will tell you in a few words the great secret of human life. By two instinctive processes man exhausts the springs of life within him. Two verbs cover all the forms which these two causes of death may take — To Will and To have your Will. Between these two limits of human activity the wise have discovered an intermediate formula, to which I owe my good fortune and long life. To Will consumes us, and To have our Will destroys us, but To Know steeps our feeble organisms in perpetual calm. In me Thought has destroyed Will, so that Power is relegated to the ordinary functions of my economy. In a word, it is not in the heart which can be broken, nor in the senses that become deadened, but it is in the brain that cannot waste away and survives everything else, that I have set my life. Moderation has kept mind and body unruffled. Yet, I have seen the whole world. I have learned all languages, lived after every manner. I have lent a Chinaman money, taking his father's corpse as a pledge, slept in an Arab's tent on the security of his bare word, signed contracts in every capital of Europe, and left my gold without hesitation in savage wigwams. I have attained everything, because I have known how to despise all things.

"My one ambition has been to see. Is not Sight in a manner Insight? And to have knowledge or insight, is not that to have instinctive possession? To be able to discover the very substance of fact and to unite its essence to our essence? Of material possession what abides with you but an idea? Think, then, how glorious must be the life of a man who can stamp all realities upon his thought, place the springs of happiness within himself, and draw thence uncounted pleasures in idea, unsoiled by earthly stains. Thought is a key to all treasures; the miser's gains are ours without his cares. Thus I have soared

above this world, where my enjoyments have been intellectual joys. I have reveled in the contemplation of seas, peoples, forests, and mountains! I have seen all things, calmly, and without weariness; I have set my desires on nothing; I have waited in expectation of everything. I have walked to and fro in the world as in a garden round about my own dwelling. Troubles, loves, ambitions, losses, and sorrows, as men call them, are for me ideas, which I transmute into waking dreams; I express and transpose instead of feeling them; instead of permitting them to prey upon my life, I dramatize and expand them; I divert myself with them as if they were romances which I could read by the power of vision within me. As I have never overtaxed my constitution, I still enjoy robust health; and as my mind is endowed with all the force that I have not wasted, this head of mine is even better furnished than my galleries. The true millions lie here," he said, striking his forehead. "I spend delicious days in communings with the past; I summon before me whole countries, places, extents of sea, the fair faces of history. In my imaginary seraglio I have all the women I have never possessed. Your wars and revolutions come up before me for judgment. What is a feverish fugitive admiration for some more or less brightly colored piece of flesh and blood; some more or less rounded human form; what are all the disasters that wait on your erratic whims compared with the magnificent power of conjuring up the whole world within your soul compared with the immeasurable joys of movement, unstrangled by the cords of time, unclogged by the fetters of space; the joys of beholding all things, of comprehending all things, of leaning over the parapet of the world to question the other spheres, to hearken to the voice of God? There," he burst out vehemently, "there are To Will and To have your Will, both together,"—he pointed to the bit of shagreen; "there are your social ideas, your immoderate desires, your excesses, your pleasures that end in death, your sorrows that quicken the pace of life, the pain is perhaps but a violent pleasure! Who could determine the point where pleasure becomes pain, where pain is still a pleasure? Is not the utmost brightness of the ideal world soothing to us, while the lightest shadows of the physical world annoy? Is not knowledge the secret of wisdom? And what is folly but a riotous expenditure of Will or Power?"

"Very good, then, a life of riotous excess for me!" said the stranger, pouncing upon the piece of shagreen.

"Young man, beware!" cried the other with incredible vehemence.

"I had resolved my existence into thought and study," the stranger replied; "and yet they have not even supported me. I am not to be gulled by a sermon worthy of Swedenborg, nor by your Oriental amulet, nor yet by your charitable endeavors to keep me in a world wherein existence is no longer possible for me. . . . Let me see now," he added, clutching the talisman convulsively, as he looked at the old man, "I wish for a royal banquet, a carouse worthy of this century, which, it is said, has brought everything to perfection! Let me have young boon companions, witty, unwarped by prejudice, merry to the verge of madness! Let one wine succeed another, each more biting and perfumed than the last, and strong enough to bring about three days of delirium! Passionate women's forms should grace that night! I would be borne away to unknown regions beyond the confines of this world, by the car and four-winged steeds of a frantic and uproarious orgie. Let us ascend to the skies, or plunge ourselves in the mire. I do not know if one soars or sinks at such moments, and I do not care! Next, I bid this enigmatical power to concentrate all delights for me in one single joy. Yes, I must comprehend every pleasure of earth and heaven in the final embrace that is to kill me. Therefore, after the wine, I wish to hold high festival to Priapus, with songs that might rouse the dead, and kisses without end; the sound of them should pass like the crackling of flame through Paris, should revive the heat of youth and passion in husband and wife, even in hearts of seventy years."

A laugh burst from the little old man. It rang in the young man's ears like an echo from hell, and tyrannously cut him short. He said no more.

"Do you imagine that my floors are going to open suddenly, so that luxuriously appointed tables may rise through them and guests from another world? No, no, young madcap. You have entered into the compact now, and there is an end of it. Henceforward, your wishes will be accurately fulfilled, but at the expense of your life. The compass of your days, visible in that skin, will contract according to the strength and number of your desires, from the least to the most extravagant. The Brahmin from whom I had this skin once explained to me that it would bring about a mysterious connection between the fortunes and the wishes of its possessor. Your first wish is a vul-

gar one, which I could fulfill, but I leave that to the issues of your new existence. After all, you were wishing to die; very well, your suicide is only put off for a time."

The stranger was surprised and irritated that this peculiar old man persisted in not taking him seriously. A half philanthropic intention peeped so clearly forth from his last jesting observation, that he exclaimed: —

"I shall soon see, sir, if any change comes over my fortunes in the time it will take to cross the width of the quay. But I should like us to be quits for such a momentous service; that is, if you are not laughing at an unlucky wretch, so I wish that you may fall in love with an opera dancer. You would understand the pleasures of intemperance then, and might perhaps grow lavish of the wealth that you have husbanded so philosophically."

He went out without heeding the old man's heavy sigh, went back through the galleries and down the staircase, followed by the stout assistant, who vainly tried to light his passage; he fled with the haste of a robber caught in the act. Blinded by a kind of delirium, he did not even notice the unexpected flexibility of the piece of shagreen, which coiled itself up, pliant as a glove in his excited fingers, till it would go into the pocket of his coat, where he mechanically thrust it. As he rushed out of the door into the street, he ran up against three young men who were passing arm in arm.

"Brute!"

"Idiot!"

Such were the gratifying expressions exchanged between them.

"Why, it is Raphael!"

"Good! we were looking for you."

"What! it is you, then?"

These three friendly exclamations quickly followed the insults, as the light of a street lamp, flickering in the wind, fell upon the astonished faces of the group.

"My dear fellow, you must come with us!" said the young man that Raphael had all but knocked down.

"What is all this about?"

"Come along, and I will tell you the history of it as we go."

By fair means or foul, Raphael must go along with his friends toward the Pont des Arts, they surrounded him, and linked him by the arm among their merry band.

"We have been after you for about a week," the speaker went on. "At your respectable hotel de Saint Quentin, where, by the way, the sign with the alternate black and red letters cannot be removed, and hangs out just as it did in the time of Jean Jacques, that Leonarda of yours told us that you were off into the country. For all that, we certainly did not look like duns, creditors, sheriff's officers, or the like. But no matter! Rastignac had seen you the evening before at the Bouffons; we took courage again, and made it a point of honor to find out whether you were roosting in a tree in the Champs Elysées, or in one of those philanthropic abodes where the beggars sleep on a twopenny rope, or if, more lucky, you were bivouacking in some boudoir or other. We could not find you anywhere. Your name was not in the jailer's registers at St. Pelagie nor at La Force! Government departments, cafés, libraries, lists of prefects' names, newspaper offices, restaurants, greenrooms — to cut it short, every lurking place in Paris, good or bad, has been explored in the most expert manner. We bewailed the loss of a man endowed with such genius, that one might look to find him either at Court or in the common jails. We talked of canonizing you as a hero of July, and, upon my word, we regretted you!"

As he spoke, the friends were crossing the Pont des Arts. Without listening to them, Raphael looked at the Seine, at the clamoring waves that reflected the lights of Paris. Above that river, in which but now he had thought to fling himself, the old man's prediction had been fulfilled, the hour of his death had been already put back by fate.

"We really regretted you," said his friend, still pursuing his theme. "It was a question of a plan in which we included you as a superior person, that is to say, somebody who can put himself above other people. The constitutional thimblerig is carried on to-day, dear boy, more seriously than ever. The infamous monarchy, displaced by the heroism of the people, was a sort of drab, you could laugh and revel with her; but La Patrie is a shrewish and virtuous wife, and willy-nilly you must take her prescribed endearments. Then besides, as you know, authority passed over from the Tuileries to the journalists, at the time when the *Budget* changed its quarters and went from the Faubourg Saint Germain to the Chaussée d'Antin. But this you may not know perhaps. The Government, that is, the aristocracy of lawyers and bankers who



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represent the country to-day, just as the priests used to do in the time of the monarchy, has felt the necessity of mystifying the worthy people of France with a few new words and old ideas, like philosophers of every school, and all strong intellects ever since time began. So now Royalist-national ideas must be inculcated, by proving to us that it is far better to pay twelve hundred million francs, thirty-three centimes to La Patrie, represented by Messieurs Such-and-Such, than to pay eleven hundred million francs, nine centimes to a king who used to say 'I' instead of 'we.' In a word, a journal, with two or three hundred thousand francs, good, at the back of it, has just been started, with a view to making an opposition paper to content the discontented, without prejudice to the national government of the citizen king. We scoff at liberty as at despotism now, and at religion or incredulity quite impartially. And since, for us, 'our country' means a capital where ideas circulate and are sold at so much a line, a succulent dinner every day, and the play at frequent intervals, where profligate women swarm, where suppers last on into the next day, and light loves are hired by the hour like cabs; and since Paris will always be the most adorable of all countries, the country of joy, liberty, wit, pretty women, *mauvais sujets*, and good wine; where the truncheon of authority never makes itself disagreeably felt, because one is so close to those who wield it,—we, therefore, sectaries of the god of Mephistopheles, have engaged to whitewash the public mind, to give fresh costumes to the actors, to put a new plank or two in the government booth, to doctor doctrinaires, and warm up old Republicans, to touch up the Bonapartists a bit, and revictual the Center; provided that we are allowed to laugh *in petto* at both kings and peoples, to think one thing in the morning and another at night, and to lead a merry life *à la Panurge*, or to recline upon soft cushions, *more orientali*.

"The scepter of this burlesque and macaronic kingdom," he went on, "we have reserved for you; so we are taking you straightway to a dinner given by the founder of the said newspaper, a retired banker, who, at a loss to know what to do with his money, is going to buy some brains with it. You will be welcomed as a brother, we shall hail you as king of these free lances, who will undertake anything; whose perspicacity discovers the intentions of Austria, England, or Russia, before either Russia, Austria, or England have formed any. Yes, we

will invest you with the sovereignty of those puissant intellects which give to the world its Mirabeaus, Talleyrands, Pitts, and Metternichs — all the clever Crispins who treat the destinies of a kingdom as gamblers' stakes, just as ordinary men play dominoes for *kirschenwasser*. We have given you out to be the most undaunted champion who ever wrestled in a drinking bout at close quarters with the monster called Carousal, whom all bold spirits wish to try a fall with; we have gone so far as to say that you have never yet been worsted. I hope you will not make liars of us. Taillefer, our amphitryon, has undertaken to surpass the circumscribed saturnalias of the petty modern Lucullus. He is rich enough to infuse pomp into trifles, and style and charm into dissipation. . . . Are you listening, Raphael?" asked the orator, interrupting himself.

"Yes," answered the young man, less surprised by the accomplishment of his wishes than by the natural manner in which the events had come about.

He could not bring himself to believe in magic, but he marveled at the accidents of human fate.

* * * * * * *

He stood leaning against the marble chimney-piece, and stayed there quietly in the middle of the principal saloon, doing his best to give no one any advantage over him; but he scrutinized the faces about him, and gave a certain vague offense to those assembled, by his inspection. Like a dog aware of his strength, he awaited the contest on his own ground, without unnecessary barking. Toward the end of the evening he strolled into the card room, walking between the door and another that opened into the billiard room, throwing a glance from time to time over a group of young men that had gathered there. He heard his name mentioned after a turn or two. Although they lowered their voices, Raphael easily guessed that he had become the topic of their debate, and he ended by catching a phrase or two spoken aloud.

"You?"

"Yes, I."

"I dare you to do it!"

"Let us make a bet on it."

"Oh, he will do it."

Just as Valentin, curious to learn the matter of the wager, came up to pay closer attention to what they were saying, a tall, strong, good-looking young fellow, who, however, possessed the

impertinent stare peculiar to people who have material force at their back, came out of the billiard room.

"I am deputed, sir," he said, coolly addressing the marquis, "to make you aware of something which you do not seem to know; your face and person generally are a sort of annoyance to every one here, and to me in particular. You have too much politeness not to sacrifice yourself to the public good, and I beg that you will not show yourself in the Club again."

"This sort of joke has been perpetrated before, sir, in garrison towns at the time of the Empire; but nowadays it is exceedingly bad form," said Raphael, dryly.

"I am not joking," the young man answered, "and I repeat it; your health will be considerably the worse for a stay here; the heat and light, the air of the saloon, and the company are all bad for your complaint."

"Where did you study medicine?" Raphael inquired.

"I took my bachelor's degree on Lepage's shooting ground in Paris, and was made a doctor at Cerizier's, the king of foils."

"There is one last degree left for you to take," said Valentin; "study the ordinary rules of politeness, and you will be a perfect gentleman."

The young men all came out of the billiard room just then, some disposed to laugh, some silent. The attention of other players was drawn to the matter; they left their cards to watch a quarrel that rejoiced their instincts. Raphael, alone among this hostile crowd, did his best to keep cool, and not to put himself in any way in the wrong; but his adversary having ventured a sarcasm containing an insult couched in unusually keen language, he replied gravely: —

"We cannot box men's ears, sir, in these days, but I am at a loss for any word by which to stigmatize such cowardly behavior as yours."

"That's enough, that's enough. You can come to an explanation to-morrow," several young men exclaimed, interposing between the two champions.

Raphael left the room in the character of aggressor, after he had accepted a proposal to meet near the Château de Bordeau, in a little sloping meadow, not very far from the newly made road, by which the man who came off victorious could reach Lyons. Raphael must now either take to his bed or leave the baths. The visitors had gained their point. At eight o'clock

next morning, his antagonist, followed by two seconds and a surgeon, arrived first on the ground.

"We shall do very nicely here; glorious weather for a duel!" he cried gayly, looking at the blue vault of sky above, at the waters of the lake, and the rocks, without a single melancholy presentiment or doubt of the issue. "If I wing him," he went on, "I shall send him to bed for a month; eh, doctor?"

"At the very least," the surgeon replied; "but let that willow twig alone, or you will weary your wrist, and then you will not fire steadily. You might kill your man then instead of wounding him."

The noise of a carriage was heard approaching.

"Here he is," said the seconds, who soon descried a calèche coming along the road; it was drawn by four horses, and there were two postilions.

"What a queer proceeding!" said Valentin's antagonist; "here he comes posthaste to be shot."

The slightest incident about a duel, as about a stake at cards, makes an impression on the minds of those deeply concerned in the results of the affair; so the young man awaited the arrival of the carriage with a kind of uneasiness. It stopped in the road; old Jonathan laboriously descended from it, in the first place, to assist Raphael to alight; he supported him with his feeble arms, and showed him all the minute attentions that a lover lavishes upon his mistress. Both became lost to sight in the footpath that lay between the highroad and the field where the duel was to take place; they were walking slowly, and did not appear again for some time after. The four onlookers at this strange spectacle felt deeply moved by the sight of Valentin as he leaned on his servant's arm; he was wasted and pale; he limped as if he had the gout, went with his head bowed down, and said not a word. You might have taken them for a couple of old men, one broken with years, the other worn out with thought; the elder bore his age visibly written in his white hair, the younger was of no age.

"I have not slept all night, sir;" so Raphael greeted his antagonist.

The icy tone and terrible glance that went with the words made the real aggressor shudder; he knew that he was in the wrong, and felt in secret ashamed of his behavior. There was something strange in Raphael's bearing, tone, and gesture; the

marquis stopped, and every one else was likewise silent. The uneasy and constrained feeling grew to a height.

"There is yet time," he went on, "to offer me some slight apology; and offer it you must, or you will die, sir! You rely even now on your dexterity, and do not shrink from an encounter in which you believe all the advantage to be upon your side. Very good, sir; I am generous, I am letting you know my superiority beforehand. I possess a terrible power. I have only to wish to do so, and I can neutralize your skill, dim your eyesight, make your hand and pulse unsteady, and even kill you outright. I have no wish to be compelled to exercise my power; the use of it costs me too dear. You would not be the only one to die. So if you refuse to apologize to me, no matter what your experience in murder, your ball will go into the waterfall there, and mine will speed straight to your heart though I do not aim it at you."

Confused voices interrupted Raphael at this point. All the time that he was speaking, the marquis had kept his intolerably keen gaze fixed upon his antagonist; now he drew himself up and showed an impassive face, like that of a dangerous madman.

"Make him hold his tongue," the young man had said to one of his seconds; "that voice of his is tearing the heart out of me."

"Say no more, sir; it is quite useless," cried the seconds and the surgeons, addressing Raphael.

"Gentlemen, I am fulfilling a duty. Has this young gentleman any final arrangements to make?"

"That is enough; that will do."

The marquis remained standing steadily, never for a moment losing sight of his antagonist; and the latter seemed, like a bird before a snake, to be overwhelmed by a well-nigh magical power. He was compelled to endure that homicidal gaze; he met and shunned it incessantly.

"I am thirsty; give me some water——" he said again to the second.

"Are you nervous?"

"Yes," he answered. "There is a fascination about that man's glowing eyes."

"Will you apologize?"

"It is too late now."

The two antagonists were placed at fifteen paces distant

from each other. Each of them had a brace of pistols at hand, and, according to the programme prescribed for them, each was to fire twice when and how he pleased, but after the signal had been given by the seconds.

"What are you doing, Charles?" exclaimed the young man who acted as a second to Raphael's antagonist; "you are putting in the ball before the powder?"

"I am a dead man," he muttered, by way of answer; "you have put me facing the sun ——"

"The sun lies behind you," said Valentin, sternly and solemnly, while he coolly loaded his pistol without heeding the fact that the signal had been given, or that his antagonist was carefully taking aim.

There was something so appalling in this supernatural unconcern, that it affected even the two postilions, brought thither by a cruel curiosity. Raphael was either trying his power or playing with it, for he talked to Jonathan, and looked toward him as he received his adversary's fire. Charles' bullet broke a branch of willow, and ricochetted over the surface of the water! Raphael fired at random, and shot his antagonist through the heart. He did not heed the young man as he dropped; he hurriedly sought the Wild Ass' Skin to see what another man's life had cost him. The talisman was no larger than a small oak leaf.



LINES TO AN INDIAN AIR.

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I ARISE from dreams of Thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low
And the stars are shining bright:
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me — who knows how?
To thy chamber window, Sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream —

The champak odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine
O belovèd as thou art!

O lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;
O! press it close to thine again
Where it will break at last.



SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

By WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveler between life and death:
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.



CECILIA DE NOËL.[1]

By LANOË FALCONER.

[LANOE FALCONER is the pseudonym of Mary Elizabeth Hawker, daughter of the late Major Hawker of the English army. She was educated in France and England, and is the author of the novels "Mademoiselle Ixe," "The Hotel d'Angleterre," and "Cecilia de Noël." She resides at Hurstbourne Priors, Whitchurch, Hants]

I. ATHERLEY'S GOSPEL.

"WHAT is the story of the ghost?"

"Story! God bless you, it has none to tell, sir; at least it never has told it, and no one else rightly knows it. It — I mean the ghost — is older than the family. We found it here when we came into the place about two hundred years ago, and it refused to be dislodged. It is rather uncertain in its habits. Sometimes it is not heard of for years; then all at once it reappears, generally, I may observe, when some imaginative female in the house is in love, or out of spirits, or bored in any other way. She sees it, and then of course — the complaint being highly infectious — so do a lot more. One of the family started the theory it was the ghost of the portrait, or rather the unknown individual whose portrait hangs high up over the sideboard in the dining room."

"You don't mean the lady in green velvet with the snuff-box?"

"Certainly not; that is my own great-grandaunt. I mean a square of black canvas with one round yellow spot in the middle and a dirty white smudge under the spot. There are members of this family — Aunt Eleanour, for instance — who

[1] By permission of the Publishers, Macmillan & Co. Ltd

tell me the yellow spot is a man's face and the dirty white smudge an Elizabethan ruff. Then there is a picture of a man in armor in the oak room, which I don't believe is a portrait at all; but Aunt Henrietta swears it is, and of the ghost too — as he was before he died, of course. And very interesting details both my aunts are ready to furnish concerning the two originals. It is extraordinary what an amount of information is always forthcoming about things of which nobody can know anything — as about the next world, for instance. The last time I went to church the preacher gave as minute an account of what our post-mortem experiences were to be as if he had gone through it all himself several times."

"Well, does the ghost usually appear in a ruff or in armor?"

"It depends entirely upon who sees it — a ghost always does. Last night, for instance, I lay you odds it wore neither ruff nor armor, because Mrs. Mallet is not likely to have heard of either the one or the other. Not that she saw the ghost — not she. What she saw was a bogy, not a ghost."

"Why, what is the difference?"

"Immense! As big as that which separates the objective from the subjective. Any one can see a bogy. It is a real thing belonging to the external world. It may be a bright light, a white sheet, or a black shadow — always at night, you know, or at least in the dusk, when you are apt to be a little mixed in your observations. The best example of a bogy was Sir Walter Scott's. It looked — in the twilight, remember — exactly like Lord Byron, who had not long departed this life at the time Sir Walter saw it. Nine men out of ten would have gone off and sworn they had seen a ghost; why, religions have been founded on just such stuff: but Sir Walter, as sane a man as ever lived — though he did write poetry — kept his head clear and went up closer to his ghost, which proved on examination to be a waterproof."

"A waterproof?"

"Or a railway rug — I forget which: the moral is the same."

"Well, what is a ghost?"

"A ghost is nothing — an airy nothing manufactured by your own disordered senses or your own overexcited brain."

"I beg to observe that I never saw a ghost in my life."

"I am glad to hear it. It does you credit. If ever any one had an excuse for seeing a ghost it would be a man whose spine

was jarred. But I meant nothing personal by the pronoun — only to give greater force to my remarks. The first person singular will do instead. The ghost belongs to the same lot as the faces that make mouths at me when I have brain fever, the reptiles that crawl about when I have an attack of the D. T., or — to take a more familiar example — the spots I see floating before my eyes when my liver is out of order. You will allow there is nothing supernatural in all that?"

"Certainly. Though, did not that pretty niece of Mrs. Molyneux's say she used to see those spots floating before her eyes when a misfortune was impending?"

"I fancy she did, and true enough too, as such spots would very likely precede a bilious attack, which is misfortune enough while it lasts. But still, even Mrs. Molyneux's niece, even Mrs. Molyneux herself, would not say the fever faces, or the reptiles, or the spots, were supernatural. And, in fact, the ghost is, so far more — more *recherché*, let us say, than the other things. It takes more than a bilious attack or a fever, or even D. T., to produce a ghost. It takes nothing less than a pretty high degree of nervous sensibility and excitable imagination. Now these two disorders have not been much developed yet by the masses, in spite of the school boards: ergo, any apparition which leads to hysterics or brandy and water in the servants' hall is a bogy, not a ghost."

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and added: —

"And now, Lindy, as we don't want another ghost haunting the house, I will conduct you to by-by."

II. The Parson's Gospel.

"Why, George; how late you are, and — how wet! Is it raining?"

"Yes; hard."

"Have you bought the ponies?"

"No; they won't do at all. But whom do you think I picked up on the way home? You will never guess. Your pet parson, Mr. Austyn."

"Mr. Austyn!"

"Yes; I found him by the roadside not far from Monk's cottage, where he had been visiting, looking sadly at a spring cart, which the owner thereof, one of the Rood Warren farmers, had managed to upset and damage considerably. He was giv-

ing Austyn a lift home when the spill took place. So, remembering your hankering and Lindy's for the society of this young Ritualist, I persuaded him that instead of tramping six miles through the wet he should come here and put up for the night with us; so leaving the farmer free to get home on his pony, I clinched the matter by promising to send him back to-morrow in time for his eight o'clock service."

"Oh dear! I wish I had known he was coming. I would have ordered a dinner he would like."

"Judging by his appearance, I should say the dinner he would like will be easily provided."

Atherley was right. Mr. Austyn's dinner consisted of soup, bread, and water. He would not even touch the fish or the eggs elaborately prepared for his especial benefit. Yet he was far from being a skeleton at the feast, to whose immaterial side he contributed a good deal — not taking the lead in conversation, but readily following whosoever did, giving his opinions on one topic after another in the manner of a man well informed, cultured, thoughtful, original even, and at the same time with no warmer interest in all he spoke of than the inhabitant of another planet might have shown.

Atherley was impressed and even surprised to a degree unflattering to the rural clergy.

"This is indeed a *rara avis* of a country curate," he confided to me after dinner, while Lady Atherley was unraveling with Austyn his connection with various families of her acquaintance "We shall hear of him in time to come, if, in the mean while, he does not starve himself to death. By the way, I lay you odds he sees the ghost. To begin with, he has heard of it — everybody has in this neighborhood; and then St. Anthony himself was never in a more favorable condition for spiritual visitations. Look at him; he is blue with asceticism. But he won't turn tail to the ghost; he'll hold his own. There's mettle in him."

This led me to ask Austyn, as we went down the bachelor's passage to our rooms, if he were afraid of ghosts.

"No; that is, I don't feel any fear now. Whether I should do so if face to face with one, is another question. This house has the reputation of being haunted, I believe. Have you seen the ghost yourself?"

"No, but I have seen others who did, or thought they did. Do you believe in ghosts?"

to spring, and I seemed to myself to be holding it at bay all the time with a great strain of the will, and, of course" — he hesitated for an instant, and then added — "in virtue of a higher power."

The reserve of all his school forbade him to say more, but I understood as well as if he had told me that he had been on his knees praying all the time, and there rose before my mind a picture of the scene — moonlight, kneeling saint and watching demon, which the leaf of some illustrated missal might have furnished.

The bronze timepiece over the fireplace struck half-past six.

"I wonder if the carriage is at the door," said Austyn, rather anxiously. He went into the hall and looked out through the narrow windows. There was no carriage visible, and I deeply regretted the second interruption that must follow when it did come.

"Let us walk up the hill and on a little way together. The carriage will overtake us. My curiosity is not yet satisfied."

"Then first, Mr. Lyndsay, you must go back and drink some coffee; you are not strong as I am, or accustomed to go out fasting into the morning air."

Outside in the shadow of the hill, where the fog lay thick and white, the gloom and the cold of the night still lingered, but as we climbed the hill we climbed, too, into the brightness of a sunny morning — brilliant, amber-tinted above the long blue shadows.

* * * * * * *

I had to speak first.

"Now tell me what the face was like."

"I do not think I can. To begin with, I have a very indistinct remembrance of either the form or the coloring. Even at the time my impression of both was very vague; what so overwhelmed and transfixed my attention, to the exclusion of everything besides itself, was the look upon the face."

"And that?"

"And that I literally cannot describe. I know no words that could depict it, no images that could suggest it; you might as well ask me to tell you what a new color was like if I had seen it in my dreams, as some people declare they have done. I could convey some faint idea of it by describing its effect upon myself, but that too is very difficult — that was like nothing I have ever felt before. It was the realization of much

which I have affirmed all my life, and steadfastly believed as well, but only with what might be called a notional assent, as the blind man might believe that light is sweet, or one who had never experienced pain might believe it was something from which the senses shrink. Every day that I have recited the creed, and declared my belief in the Life Everlasting, I have by implication confessed my entire disbelief in any other. I knew that what seems so solid is not solid, so real is not real; that the life of the flesh, of the senses, of things seen, is but the 'stuff that dreams are made of'—'a dream within a dream,' as one modern writer has called it; 'the shadow of a dream,' as another has it. But last night——"

He stood still, gazing straight before him, as if he saw something that I could not see.

"But last night?" I repeated, as we walked on again.

"Last night? I not only believed, I saw, I felt it, with a sudden intuition conveyed to me in some inexplicable manner by the vision of that face. I felt the utter insignificance of what we name existence, and I perceived too behind it that which it conceals from us—the real Life, illimitable, unfathomable, the element of our true being with its eternal possibilities of misery or joy."

"And all this came to you through something of an evil nature?"

"Yes; it was like the effect of lightning on a pitch-dark night—the same vivid and lurid illumination of things unperceived before. It must be like the revelation of death, I should think, without, thank God, that fearful sense of the irrevocable which death must bring with it. Will you not rest here?"

For we had reached Beggar's Stile. But I was not tired for once, so keen, so life-giving was the air, sparkling with that fine elixir whereby morning braces us for the day's conflict. Below, through slowly dissolving mists, the village showed as if it smiled, each little cottage hearth lifting its soft spiral of smoke to a zenith immeasurably deep, immaculately blue.

"But the ghost itself?" I said, looking up at him as we both rested our arms upon the gate. "What do you think of that?"

"I am afraid there is no possible doubt what that was. Its face, as I tell you, was a revelation of evil—evil and its punishment. It was a lost soul."

"Do you mean by a lost soul, a soul that is in never-ending torment?"

"Not in physical torment certainly; that would be a very material interpretation of the doctrine. Besides, the Church has always recognized degree and difference in the punishment of the lost. This, however, they all have in common — eternal separation from the Divine Being."

"Even if they repent and desire to be reunited to Him?"

"Certainly; that must be part of their suffering."

"And yet you believe in a good God?"

"In what else could I believe even without revelation? But goodness, divine goodness, is far from excluding severity and wrath, and even vengeance. Here the witness of science and of history are in accord with that of the Christian Church; their first manifestation of God is always of 'one that is angry with us and threatens evil.'"

The carriage had now overtaken us and stopped close to us. I rose to say good-by. Austyn shook me by the hand and moved towards the carriage; then, as if checked by a sudden thought, returned upon his steps and stood before me, his earnest eyes fixed upon me as if the whole self-denying soul within him hungered to awaken mine.

"I feel I must speak one word before I leave you, even if it be out of season. With the recollection of last night still so fresh, even the serious things of life seem trifles, far more its small conventionalities. Mr. Lyndsay, your friend has made his choice, but you are dallying between belief and unbelief. Oh, do not dally long! We need no spirit from the dead to tell us life is short. Do we not feel it passing quicker and quicker every year? The one thing that is serious in all its shows and delusions is the question it puts to each one of us, and which we answer to our eternal loss or gain. Many different voices call to us in this age of false prophets, but one only threatens as well as invites. Would it not be only wise, prudent even, to give the preference to that? Mr. Lyndsay, I beseech you, accept the teaching of the Church, which is one with that of conscience and of nature, and believe that there *is* a God, a Sovereign, a Lawgiver, a Judge."

He was gone, and I still stood thinking of his words, and of his gaze while he spoke them.

The mists were all gone now, leaving behind them in shimmering dewdrops an iridescent veil on mead and copse and gar-

den; the river gleamed in diamond curves and loops, while in the covert near me the birds were singing as if from hearts that overbrimmed with joy.

And slowly, sadly, I repeated to myself the words — Sovereign, Lawgiver, Judge.

I was hungering for bread; I was given a stone

III. Cecilia.

The rain gradually ceased falling as we drove onward and upward to the station. It stood on high ground, overlooking a wide sweep of downland and fallow, bordered towards the west by close-set woodlands, purple that evening against a sky of limpid gold, which the storm clouds discovered as they lifted.

I had not long to wait, for, punctual to its time, the train steamed into the station. From that part of the train to which I first looked, four or five passengers stepped out, not one of them certainly the lady that I waited for. Glancing from side to side I saw, standing at the far end of the platform, two women; one of them was tall; could this be Mrs. de Noel? And yet no, I reflected as I went towards them, for she held a baby in her arms — a baby moreover swathed, not in white and laces, but in a tattered and discolored shawl; while her companion, lifting out baskets and bundles from a third-class carriage, was poorly and even miserably clad. But again, as I drew nearer, I observed that the long fine hand which supported the child was delicately gloved, and that the cloak which swung back from the encircling arm was lined and bordered with very costly fur. This and something in the whole outline —

"Mrs. de Noel?" I murmured inquiringly.

Then she turned towards me, and I saw her, as I often see her now in dreams, against that sunset background of aerial gold which the artist of circumstance had painted behind her, like a new Madonna, holding the child of poverty to her heart, pressing her cheek against its tiny head with a gesture whose exquisite tenderness, for at least that fleeting instant, seemed to bridge across the gulf which still yawns between Dives and Lazarus. So standing, she looked at me with two soft brown eyes, neither large nor beautiful, but in their outlook direct and simple as a child's. Remembering as I met them what Mrs.

Molyneux had said, I saw and comprehended as well what she meant. Benevolence is but faintly inscribed on the faces of most men, even of the better sort. "I will love you, my neighbor," we thereon decipher, "when I have attended to my own business, in the first place; if you are lovable, or at least likable, in the second." But in the transparent gaze that Cecilia de Noel turned upon her fellows beamed love poured forth without stint and without condition. It was as if every man, woman, and child who approached her became instantly to her more interesting than herself, their defects more tolerable, their wants more imperative, their sorrows more moving, than her own. In this lay the source of that mysterious charm so many have felt, so few have understood, and yielding to which even those least capable of appreciating her confessed that, whatever her conduct might be, she herself was irresistibly lovable. A kind of dreamlike haze seemed to envelop us as I introduced myself, as she smiled upon me, as she resigned the child to its mother and bade them tenderly farewell.

IV. The Next Day — Cecilia's Gospel.

He went forward to meet and stop the carriage, out of which, at his suggestion, Mrs. de Noel readily came down to join us.

"Do not get up, Mr. Lyndsay," she called out as she came toward us, "or I will go away. I don't want to sit down."

"Sit down, Lindy," said Atherley, sharply, "Cissy likes tobacco in the open air."

She rested her arms upon the gate and looked downwards.

"The dear, dear old river! It makes me feel young again to look at it."

"Cissy," said Atherley, his arms on the gate, his eyes staring straight towards the opposite horizon, "tell us about the ghost; were you frightened?"

There was a certain tension in the pause which followed. Would she tell us or not? I almost felt Atherley's rebound of satisfaction as well as my own at the sound of her voice. It was uncertain and faint at first, but by degrees grew firm again, as timidity was lost in the interest of what she told: —

"Last night I sat up with Mrs. Molyneux, holding her hand till she fell asleep, and that was very late, and then I went to the dressing room, where I was to sleep; and as I undressed,

told me that by sins committed against others when it was on earth it had broken the bond between itself and all other creatures. While it was what we call alive, it did not feel this, for the senses confuse us and hide many things from the good, and so still more from the wicked; but when it died and lost the body by which it seemed to be kept near to other beings, it found itself imprisoned in the most dreadful loneliness — loneliness which no one in this world can even imagine. Even the pain of solitary confinement, so it told me, which drives men mad, is only like a shadow or type of this loneliness of spirits. Others there might be, but it knew nothing of them — nothing besides this great empty darkness everywhere, except the place it had once lived in, and the people who were moving about it; and even those it could only perceive dimly as if looking through a mist, and always so unutterably away from them all. I am not giving its own words, you know, George, because I cannot remember them. I am not certain it did speak to me; the thoughts seemed to pass in some strange way into my mind; I cannot explain how, for the still far-away voice did not really speak. Sometimes, it told me, the loneliness became agony, and it longed for a word or a sign from some other being, just as Dives longed for the drop of cold water; and at such times it was able to make the living people see it. But that, alas! was useless, for it only alarmed them so much that the bravest and most benevolent rushed away in terror or would not let it come near them. But still it went on showing itself to one after another, always hoping that some one would take pity on it and speak to it, for it felt that if comfort ever came to it, it must be through a living soul, and it knew of none save those in this world and in this place. And I said: 'Why did you not turn for help to God?'

"Then it gave a terrible answer: it said, 'What is God?'

"And when I heard these words there came over me a wild kind of pity, such as I used to feel when I saw my little child struggling for breath when he was ill, and I held out my arms to this poor lonely thing, but it shrank back crying: —

"'Speak to me, but do not touch me, brave human creature. I am all death, and if you come too near me the Death in me may kill the life in you.'

"But I said: 'No Death can kill the life in me, even though it kill my body. Dear fellow-spirit, I cannot tell you what I know; but let me take you in my arms; rest for an

instant on my heart, and perhaps I may make you feel what I feel all around us.'

"And as I spoke I threw my arms around the shadowy form and strained it to my breast. And I felt as if I were pressing to me only air, but air colder than any ice, so that my heart seemed to stop beating, and I could hardly breathe. But I still clasped it closer and closer, and as I grew colder it seemed to grow less chill.

"And at last it spoke, and the whisper was not far away, but near. It said:—

"'It is enough; now I know what God is!'

"After that I remember nothing more, till I woke up and found myself lying on the floor beside the bed. It was morning, and the spirit was not there; but I have a strong feeling that I have been able to help it, and that it will trouble you no more.

"Surely it is late! I must go at once. I promised to have tea with the children."

* * * * * * *

Neither of us spoke; neither of us stirred; when the sound of her light footfall was heard no more, there was complete silence. Below, the mists had gathered so thickly that now they spread across the valley one dead white sea of vapor, in which village and woods and stream were all buried—all except the little church spire, that, still unsubmerged, pointed triumphantly to the sky; and what a sky! For that which yesterday had steeped us in cold and darkness, now, piled even to the zenith in mountainous cloud masses, was dyed, every crest and summit of it, in crimson fire, pouring from a great fount of color, where the heavens opened to show that wonder world in the west, whence saints and sinners have drawn their loveliest images of the Rest to come.

But perhaps I saw all things irradiated by the light which had risen upon my darkness—the light that never was on land or sea, but shines reflected in the human face.

* * * * * * *

"George, I am waiting for your interpretation."

"It is very simple, Lindy," he said.

But there was a tone in his voice I had heard once—and only once—before, when, through the first terrible hours that followed my accident, he sat patiently beside me in the darkened room, holding my hot hand in his broad cool palm.

"It is very simple. It is the most easily explained of all the accounts. It was a dream from beginning to end. She fell asleep praying, thinking, as she says; what was more natural or inevitable than that she should dream of the ghost? And it all confirms what I say: that visions are composed by the person who sees them. Nothing could be more characteristic of Cissy than the story she has just told us."

"And let it be a dream," I said. "It is of no consequence, for the dreamer remains, breathing and walking on this solid earth. I have touched her hand, I have looked into her face. Thank God! she is no vision, the woman who could dream this dream! George, how do you explain the miracle of her existence?"

But Atherley was silent.



LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER.

BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

A Chieftain to the Highlands bound
Cries "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry!"

"Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle
This dark and stormy water?"
"O I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this, Lord Ullin's daughter.

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

"His horsemen hard behind us ride —
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?"

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight
"I'll go, my chief, I'm ready:
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady: —

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white
I'll row you o'er the ferry."

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode armèd men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.

"O haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
"Though tempests round us gather,
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father."

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When O! too strong for human hand
The tempest gathered o'er her.

And still they rowed amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing
Lord Ullin reached that fatal shore,—
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For, sore dismayed, through storm and shade
His child he did discover:—
One lovely hand she stretched for aid,
And one was round her lover.

"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief,
"Across this stormy water:
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—O my daughter!"

'Twas vain: the loud waves lashed the shore,
Return or aid preventing
The waters wild went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

STORIES BY ALPHONSE DAUDET.

TRANSLATED BY NATHAN HASKELL DOLE.

[ALPHONSE DAUDET, the celebrated French novelist, was born of poor parents at Nîmes, May 13, 1840, and attended school in Lyons. At seventeen he went to Paris with his elder brother Ernest, who afterwards distinguished himself as a novelist and historian, and obtained a position as secretary to the Duc de Morny. He began contributing to the *Figaro* and other Parisian journals, and in 1858 published a volume of poems, entitled "The Lovers." Daudet's reputation rests chiefly upon his novels and stories, such as "Tartarin of Tarascon" (continued in "Tartarin in the Alps" and "Port Tarascon"), "Jack"; "Fromont, Jr., and Risler, Sr.," crowned by the French Academy; "The Nabob"; "Kings in Exile"; "Numa Roumestan"; "Sapho"; and "L'Immortel," a satire on the French Academy. "L'Arlésienne" (with music by Bizet, composer of "Carmen") is his chief contribution to dramatic literature. Daudet died in Paris, December 16, 1897.]

THE MONKEY.

IT is Saturday evening. The day is done and so is the week, and one feels that Sunday is already come. It is pay day, and all through the suburbs there are shouts, voices, the opening and shutting of wine-room doors. Amid this throng of workmen, which overflows the sidewalk and presses on down the wide, sloping street, a little shadowylike figure stealthily hurries in the opposite direction, up the hill. Wrapped in a shawl which is too thin and worn, with her little wan face framed in a bonnet overlarge, she has the appearance of shame, misery, and of such anxiety! Where is she going? What is her errand? In her hurried gait, in her fixed gaze which makes her seem to go still faster, one reads these anxious words: "If I only get there in time!" As she passes, the men turn round, sneer. All these work people know her and in compliment to her ugliness call her by a ridiculous name: —

"See, the monkey — Valentin's monkey — who is going to fetch her husband." And they hurry her on.

"Kss . . . kss — perhaps he's there; perhaps he isn't."

But without heeding them she goes, and goes, out of breath, panting, for this street which leads to the city gates is indeed hard to climb.

At last here she is. It is quite at the highest point of the suburbs, at a crossing of the outer streets. A great manufactory. But they are just shutting the doors. The steam of the



ALPHONSE DAUDET

engines no longer turning the machinery, is hissing in its escape like the noise of a locomotive. A little smoke still arises from the tall chimneys, and the warm atmosphere which surrounds the deserted buildings seems to be the breath, the spirit even, of the labor which has now ceased. All is over. One single little light still gleams behind the grated window on the first floor. It is the cashier's lamp. Lo, that vanishes just at the moment the woman arrives. Ah, well, it is too late! All are paid. What shall she do now? Where can she find him, so as to rescue her week's allowance, to prevent him drinking it all up? Such need there is of money at home! The children are out of stockings, the baker is not paid. . . . She sinks down on the curbstone, looking vaguely out into the night, without the energy to move.

The wine shops of the suburb are overflowing with gayety and light. All the life of the silent factories is now to be found in these dens. Into the street, through the soiled panes, where the rows of bottles mingle their false colors, the poisonous green of the absinthe, the rose of the bitters, the gold spangles of Dantzic brandies, comes the sound of shouts, songs, clinking of glasses, and the jingling of coins thrown on the counter by hands blackened by their gambling gains. Weary arms lean on the tables, deadened by the brutishness of labor; and in the unhealthy heat of the place all these wretches forget that there is no fire at home, and that their wives and their children are cold.

In front of these low windows, the only ones lighted in the deserted street, a little shadow passes timidly back and forth. Hunt, hunt, poor "monkey"! She goes from one wine room to another, leans over, wipes a corner of the pane with her shawl, gazes, then goes on ever restless, feverish. All at once she trembles.

There her Valentin is, right before her eyes. A great strapping fellow in a white blouse, proud of his curly hair and of his stalwart frame. They are crowding around him, listening to him. He speaks so well, and then it is he who settles the bill! Meanwhile the poor "monkey" is outside there shivering, and presses her face to the window, so as to see in the brilliant gaslight the table where her wrong husband sits, brightly polished, weighed down with bottles and glasses, and the flushed faces surrounding it.

Reflected in the glass, the woman has the appearance of

being seated in the midst of them, like a reproach, a living remorse. But Valentin does not see her. Taken and swallowed up in these endless barroom discussions, which are begun again with every glass, and almost as dangerous to the reason as the adulterated wines, he does not see this little wan, pale face which calls him there from behind the panes, nor the sad eyes which seek his. She, on her side, does not dare to enter. To come for him there, before his comrades, 'twould only affront him.

If she were only pretty, but she is so ugly! Ah, how blooming and comely she was ten years ago, when they first met. Every morning, when he was going to his work, he would pass her as she went to hers, poor, but dressing as well as her condition would admit, coquettish in the fashion of this strange Paris, where ribbons and flowers are sold under the black shelter of gateways. They fell in love the first thing, as their eyes met, but, not having money, they had to wait long before they were married. At last the lad's mother furnished a mattress, and the girl's mother likewise; and, as the young girl was a favorite, a collection was raised for her in the shop, and so their arrangements were made.

The wedding dress was loaned by a friend, the veil was hired of a hairdresser, and thus they started one morning on foot through the streets to be married. At the church they had to wait till the end of the funeral masses; to wait also at the townhouse until the wealthy marriages were certified. Then he went with her to the suburbs, high up, into a room brick-tiled and dingy, at the end of a long lobby full of other rooms, noisy, dirty, quarrelsome. Housekeeping began at the outset to be disgusting. So their happiness did not last long. Living as he did with other drunkards, he began to drink with them. She, seeing how the women wept, lost courage; and while he was at the taproom she spent her time with her neighbors, listless, humiliated, cradling with endless querulousness the infant in her arms. It was thus she became so ugly, and gained in the shops the miserable name of "the monkey."

The little shadow is still there, going to and fro before the window. Her slow steps can be heard in the filth of the sidewalk; she coughs a hollow cough, for the evening was rainy and chill. How long must she wait? Two or three times already she has laid her hand upon the door, but without

daring to open. At last, nevertheless, the thought that her children have nothing to eat takes the place of courage. She enters. But hardly has she passed the threshold when a loud burst of laughter stops her short. "See, Valentin, the monkey." Indeed, she is very ugly with her locks dripping with rain, with the pallor of long waiting and fatigue on her cheeks.

"See, Valentin, the monkey." Trembling, abashed, the poor woman stands without motion. He jumps up, furious. What, she dare to come for him, then, to humiliate him, before his comrades? Just wait, wait — you shall see! And terrible to behold, with doubled fist, Valentin springs forward. The wretched creature saves herself by running, while they hoot at her. Valentin clears the door just behind her; two steps and he catches her at the street corner. All is dark — no one is in sight. Ah, poor "monkey."

But no! Away from his boon companions the Parisian workman is not wicked. Once face to face with her, how weak he is — submissive, almost repentant. Now they go off together, arm in arm, and while they go the voice of the woman arises in the night, tender, plaintive, hoarse with tears. The "monkey" conquered the hero, who is weaker than she.

A Bookkeeper.

"Brr — what a mist!" says the worthy man, as he steps into the street. He hastily pulls up his collar, draws his muffler over his mouth, and with head down and his hands in his pockets he starts for his office, whistling.

A regular mist in fact. In the streets it is of no account; in the heart of a great city the mist does not remain any more than the snow. The roofs tear it to pieces, the walls absorb it, it gets lost in houses as they are opened one by one, it makes the stairways slippery, the banisters moist. The movement of carriages, the going and coming of pedestrians, those early pedestrians so hurried and so poor, break it up, carry it away, scatter it. It clings to thin and scanty working-day clothes, to the waterproofs of shop girls, to their little flabby veils, to their great portfolios of embroidery. But over the still deserted quays, the bridges, the bank, the river, heavy, dense, motionless is the mist, through which the sun is rising yonder behind Notre Dame with the light like a midnight taper shining through ground glass.

In spite of the wind, in spite of the mist, the man in question follows the quays on his way to his office. He might take another course, but the river seems to have a mysterious attraction for him. It is his delight to go along the parapets, to graze by these stone balustrades worn by the elbows of idlers. At this time and in such weather idlers are not numerous. Yet here and there he passes a woman with a clothes basket resting against the parapet, or some poor devil leaning over toward the water with an air of world weariness. Each time the man turns round, looks inquisitively at them and then at the water, as if his mind connected them and the river by an inner thought.

The river is not gay this morning. This mist rising from the waves seems to stifle it. The timber roofs along the bank, all these irregular, slanting chimney-flues which are reflected intercrossing and smoking in the depths of the water, make you think of some lugubrious manufactory which from the bottom of the Seine sends out over Paris all its smoke in the form of mist. But our man does not seem to find this so sad — not he. The dampness penetrates him to the skin, his clothes have not a dry thread in them, but on he goes just the same, whistling, with a happy smile hovering in the corners of his lips. It is so long that he has had to do with the mists of the Seine. And then he knows that when he reaches his destination he will find a good foot warmer well lined with fur, his stove waiting for him all heated, and the little warm plate in which he gets his breakfast every morning. These are the delights of the employee, the joys of the prison, known only to the poor, wasted beings whose whole life is spent in seclusion.

"I must not forget to buy my apples," he says to himself from time to time, and he whistles, and he hurries on. You never saw any one go to his work so gayly.

Quays, nothing but quays, then a bridge. Now he is back of Notre Dame. At this end of the island the mist is denser than ever. It draws in from three sides at once, half swallows up the lofty towers, masses itself at the angle of the bridge as if it wished to conceal something. The man stops; it is there.

He catches a confused glimpse of sinister shadows, of people crouching on the sidewalk with an air of expectation, and just as behind the gratings of monasteries and squares baskets displayed, full of biscuit, oranges, apples. Oh the beautiful apples,

so pure, so rosy in their dampness. He fills his pockets and smiles upon the dealer who is shivering with his feet upon his chafing pan. Then he opens a door in the mist, and crosses a little court where a dray is standing with horses harnessed.

"Is there something for us this morning?" he asks as he goes by. A drayman all dripping answers: —

"Yes, sir, and something above the ordinary." Then he hastily enters his office.

There it is, warm and comfortable. The stove is drawing briskly in the corner. The foot warmer is in its place. His little armchair is ready for him, in a good position near the window. The mist like a curtain across the panes makes a uniform and gentle light, and the great books with green backs stand in line over their pigeonholes. A regular notary's office.

The man draws a long breath; he is at home.

Before beginning work he opens a great clothespress, takes out some lustring sleeves which he puts on carefully, a little plate of red clay, lumps of sugar which come from the café, and then he begins to peel his apples, looking around him with satisfaction. The fact is, a more cheerful, a better lighted, a more conveniently arranged office could not be found. What is singular about it, however, is the sound of water which is heard on all sides, surrounds you, envelops you as if you were in a ship's cabin. Down below, the Seine murmurs against the arches of the bridge, and makes and unmakes its floating foam again upon this end of the island, which is always covered with planks, logs, and rubbish. Even in the house all around the office there is a trickling of water thrown in pailfuls, the noise of continual washing. Somehow this water chills you even to hear it. You feel that it drips on a solid flooring, that it spatters on great marble slabs and tables which make it seem colder.

What is it then that needs so much washing in this strange house? What ineffaceable stain?

Now and then when the sound of pouring water ceases, down below you hear drops falling one by one, as if after a thaw or a great rain. You would say that the wintry mist, collecting on the roofs, on the walls, was melting in the heat of the stove and dropping steadily.

The man pays no heed to it. He is entirely occupied with his apples, which begin to sing in the red plate, giving out a faint perfume of caramels, and this pleasant song prevents him

from hearing the noise of the water, the sinister noise of the water.

"Whenever you are ready, clerk," says a hoarse voice in the back room. He looks at his apples and goes out regretfully. Where is he going? Through the door one moment opened, there comes a dull cold draught which brings with it the scent of reeds and marshes, and a vision is caught of clothes drying on lines, faded blouses, overalls, a chintz gown hanging at full length by the sleeves and dripping, dripping.

His task is done. He comes back, lays on the table a few slight articles all moist, and then returns with a shiver to the stove to rub the numbness from his hands red with cold.

"They must be mad, indeed, such weather as this," he says to himself, shuddering; "what is the matter with them all?"

And when he is fairly warm, and his sugar begins to melt on the edge of the plate, he begins to eat his breakfast on a corner of the desk. Even as he eats he opens one of his ledgers and complacently turns the leaves. It is so well bound, this big book. Straight lines, headings in blue ink, little reflections of gold dust, sheets of blotting paper on each page, such carefulness, such order.

It seems that business is good. The worthy man has the satisfied air of an accountant finding an excellent inventory at the year's end. While he is taking his delight in turning the pages of his book, the doors open in the anteroom, the steps of a throng of men echo on the pavement; they speak in undertones as if in a church: "Oh, how young she is! What a pity!" and there is a pushing and a whispering.

What difference to him does it make that she is young? Calmly, while finishing his apple, he draws toward him the objects which he had just brought in. A thimble full of sand, a portemonnaie containing one sou, little rusty scissors, so rusty that they can never be used again — oh! never again — a service book, with the leaves stuck together, a tattered letter, illegible, of which a word or two can be read: "L'enfant . . . pas d'arg . . . mois de nourrice."

The bookkeeper shrugs his shoulders as if to say: —

"I know that."

Then he takes his pen, blows the bread crumbs carefully from his great book, makes a gesture to get his hand in posi-

tion, and in his finest penmanship he writes the name he has just deciphered: —

"Félicie Rameau, brunisseuse, dix-sept ans."

A Knight of the Legion of Honor.

A STORY OF ALGIERS.

One evening, in Algiers, towards the close of a day of hunting, a violent tempest overtook me in the plain of the Chélif, a few leagues from Orleansville. Not the shadow of a town or caravansary in sight; nothing but dwarf palms, patches of lentisks, great plowed fields stretching as far as the horizon. Moreover the Chélif, swelled by the rain, began to roar in an alarming fashion and I ran the risk of spending my night in the open moor. Luckily the civil interpreter of the Bureau of Milianah, who was with me, remembered that there was very near us, concealed in a valley, a tribe whose aga he knew, and we decided to go to him and ask shelter for the night.

These Arab villages of the plain are so buried in the cactuses and Barbary fig trees, their huts of dry earth are built so close to the ground, that we were in the midst of the "donar" before we knew it. Was this perfect silence owing to the time of day, to the rain? . . . But the surroundings seemed to me very melancholy, as though under the weight of some sorrow which had suspended all life there. In the fields round about, the harvest was fast going to destruction. The wheat, the barley, everywhere else already garnered, were here still lying in the fields rotting. The rusty harrows and plows were outdoors, forgotten, in the rain. The whole tribe had this same air of dilapidated sadness and indifference. The dogs scarcely barked at our approach. From time to time the wailing of infants might be heard in the depths of a "gourbi," and we saw the shaved head of some boy or the ragged "haïck" of some old man passing through the thickets. Here and there were small mules shivering under the bushes. But not a horse, not a young man — as though it were still in the period of the great wars, and all the cavaliers gone months and months.

The mansion of the aga, a kind of long farmhouse, with white walls and no windows, seemed to be as lifeless as the others. We found the stables open, the stalls and the cribs empty, without a groom to receive our horses.

"Let us look in the Moorish coffeeroom," said my companion to me.

What is called the Moorish coffeeroom is the reception parlor, as it were, of the Arab chiefs — a house in a house, reserved for transient guests, and in which these good Mussulmans, with all politeness and affability, can practice the virtues of hospitality and at the same time preserve that family seclusion which the law commands. The Moorish coffeeroom of the Aga Si-Sliman was open and silent like the stables. The high whitewashed walls, the trophies of arms, the ostrich feathers, the wide, low divan on all sides of the room, all were going to ruin from the drops of rain which were blown through the door by the gusts of wind.

And yet there were people in the coffeeroom. In the first place the keeper, an old Kabyle in rags, with his head bent over between his knees, near an overturned brasier. Then the son of the aga, a handsome youth, feverish and pale, who was reposing on the divan, wrapped in a black "bournose," with two great greyhounds at his feet.

When we entered there was no motion, except that one of the greyhounds raised his head, and the youth deigned to turn toward us his handsome black eyes, feverish and languishing.

"And Si-Sliman?" said the interpreter. The keeper made a vague gesture, pointing to the horizon, far, so far! We perceived that Si-Sliman had gone on some long journey, but as the rain did not allow us to continue our ride, the interpreter, turning to the son of the aga, said to him in Arabic that we were friends of his father and would like shelter till the next day. Immediately the youth arose, in spite of the fever which was burning in his veins, gave orders to the keepers; then, directing us to the divans with a courteous gesture as if to say, "You are my guests," he saluted us in the Arab manner, his head bent, a kiss on the end of his fingers, and, wrapping himself proudly in his bournose, went out with all the gravity of an aga and householder.

And then the keeper rekindled his brasier, placed thereon two microscopic kettles, and while he was getting us the coffee ready we succeeded in learning from him some details of his master's journey and the strange neglect into which the tribe had fallen. The Arab spoke rapidly, with motions like those of an old woman, using strong guttural tones, sometimes interrupted by long silences, during which we heard the rain fall-

ing on the mosaic pavement of the inner court, the singing of the kettles, and the howls of jackals wandering in thousands over the plain. This is what had happened to the unlucky Si-Sliman: —

Four months before, on the anniversary of the 15th of August, he had received the famous decoration of the Legion of Honor, for which they had kept him waiting so long. He was the only aga in the province who had failed of it. All the others were chevaliers, officers; two or three even wore around their haicks the broad ribbon of commander, which, in all their innocence, they used for handkerchiefs, as I have often seen the Bach'aga Bonalem do. What had prevented Si-Sliman from receiving the decoration was a quarrel about a game of cards which he had had with the chief of the Arab Bureau, and the military coterie is so powerful in Algiers that for six years past the name of the aga had been on the list of those proposed without ever an election. So you can imagine the joy of the worthy Si-Sliman when, on the 15th of August, a spahi from Orleansville had come to bring him the little gilded casket with the patent of knight of the Legion of Honor; and when Baïa, the favorite of his four wives, had attached the cross of France to his camel's hair bournose, it gave the tribe the opportunity of indulging in all sorts of interminable sports. All night long there was the music of flutes and tambourines. They had dancing and fireworks, and I do not know how many sheep were slaughtered; and in order that the feast should lack nothing, a famous improviser from Djendel composed in honor of Si-Sliman a magnificent cantata, which began thus: —

O, wind, harness thy chargers and carry the good tidings.

The next day at dawn Si-Sliman summoned to arms the van and the rear van of his *goum* and hastened to Algiers with his men to thank the governor. At the gates of the city the *goum* halted, as the custom was. The aga went alone to the Government palace, saw the duke of Malakoff and assured him of his devotion to France with a few pompous phrases in that Oriental style which is called imaginative because for three thousand years all young men have been compared to palms and all women to gazelles. Then, having fulfilled these duties, he mounted so as to show himself in the city, worshiped at the mosque, scattered money among the poor, visited the barbers,

The noise of his disgrace had already spread through the city. The Jews of Bab Azoun street watched him go by and sneered. The Moorish merchants on the other hand turned from him with an air of compassion. Yet this compassion hurt him more than the Jewish laughter. He went on and on, far from the walls, seeking the darkest byways. The place from which his cross had been torn burned like an open wound. And all the time he was thinking, "What will my men say? What will my wives say?"

Then there came over him paroxysms of rage. He saw himself preaching a holy war down on the borders of Morocco, which are red with fires and battles, or even dashing through the streets of Algiers at the head of his *goum*, robbing the Jews, massacring the Christians, and then himself falling amid the grand ruin in which he should hide his disgrace. Everything, except the return to his tribe, appeared possible to him. All at once, in the midst of his plans for revenge, the thought of the *emberour* struck him like a flash of light.

The *emberour!* For Si-Sliman, as for all the Arabs, the idea of justice and of honor is summed up in this word alone. He was the true head for believing Mussulmans in this period of decay. He of Constantinople appeared to them far, far off, a being created by reason, a sort of invisible pope who had kept only his spiritual power, and in these days we know what that is worth.

But the *emberour*, with his great cannons, his zouaves, his ironclads. When Si-Sliman had once thought of him, he believed himself saved. Surely the emperor would give him back his cross. The journey was a matter of eight days, and he knew that his *goum* would wait for him at the gates of Algiers. The steamboat sailing the next day would take him towards Paris, full of calm and serenity, as though it were a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Poor Si-Sliman! Four months ago the unhappy aga had sailed, and the letters which he sent his wives spoke no more of return. For four months he had been buried in the fogs of Paris, spending his days in interviews with ministers, everywhere derided, caught in the terrible mill of the French Administration, sent from bureau to bureau, soiling his bournose on the dusty benches of antechambers, on the alert for an audience never to be; then at evening he would be seen with his long, sad face, absurd from its very majesty, as he waited

for his key in the office of his boarding house, and mounted to his room, weary by reason of his endless errands and rebuffs, yet still proud, clinging to his hope, like a madman fixed in his pursuit after his honor.

Meanwhile, his band, crouching near the gate Bab Azoun, were waiting for him with Oriental fatalism; his horses, tethered near the sea, neighed for his return. In the tribe all was at loose ends, the harvest perishing in the fields for lack of hands. The women, the children, counted the days, their faces turned towards Paris; and it was pitiful to see how much hope, despair, ruin, were the result of that piece of red ribbon. . . . What will be the end of it all?

"God only knows," said the keeper, sighing; and through the open door, pointing over the melancholy, violet plain, his bare arm showed us the faint crescent of the white moon shining in the evening sky.

A Midnight Party in the Marais.

M. Majesté, manufacturer of seltzer water in the Marais, has just been having a little party with his friends off the Place Royale and is on his way to his lodgings humming a song as he goes. The clock on Saint Paul's strikes two. "How late it is!" says the worthy man to himself, and he quickens his steps; but the pavement is slippery, the streets are dark, and moreover, in this crazy old quarter which dates back to the time when carriages were scarce, there is a maze of corners, bends, and mounting stones before the doors for the use of riders. All this hinders fast walking, especially when one's legs are a little unsteady and one's eyes are inclined to see double owing to the toasts of the evening. But at last M. Majesté reaches home. He stops before a large sculptured portal on which, in the moonlight, shines a newly gilt escutcheon, an ancient coat of arms repainted which he has taken as his trade-mark: —

Hôtel ci-devant de Nesmond
Majesté Jeune
Fabricant D'Eau de Seltz.

On all the siphons of the factory, on the memoranda, on the letter heads, the ancient arms of the Nesmonds are thus exhibited and glorified.

Next to the portal comes the court, a large airy court which, in the daytime, when thrown open, gives light to the whole street. At the further end of the court is a large and very ancient building; black walls ornamented with sculpture, delicate iron balconies, stone balconies with pilasters, immense lofty windows surmounted with pediments, with crests which rise as high as the upper stories, like so many little roofs within the roof, and finally, on the top, in the midst of the slates, the dormer windows of the mansard, round, coquettish, framed in garlands like mirrors; besides all this a massive stone stairway, worn and discolored by the rain, a leafless vine clinging to the walls, a vine as black and twisted as the rope which swings yonder from the pulley of the loft, and over everything a certain intense appearance of antiquity and of melancholy. It is the ancient Nesmond mansion.

In broad daylight, the appearance of the mansion is not the same. The words *Caisse*, *Magasin*, *Entrée des Ateliers* glitter everywhere in golden letters on the ancient walls, make them live again, bring back their youth. Railroad trucks shake the portal, the clerks step forth with pens behind their ears, to receive the goods. The court is blocked with boxes and baskets, with straw, with wrappings. It is evidently a factory. But at night, in the dark silence, by the light of this winter moon which casts and intermingles deep shadows amid the confusion of complicated roofs, the antiquated mansion of the Nesmonds is clad again with seignioral attractions. The balconies are of lace work; the courtyard seems to grow, and the old stairway, lighted by irregular windows, makes you think of the recesses of a cathedral with empty niches and with massive steps resembling altars.

This night especially M. Majesté finds that his house has a singularly imposing appearance. As he crosses the deserted court, the echo of his steps makes a deep impression upon him. The staircase appears immense, unusually difficult to mount. It is doubtless the party. Reaching the first floor he stops to get breath, and approaches a window. What a fine thing it is to live in a historic mansion! M. Majesté is no poet; oh no! And yet as he looks around on this handsome aristocratic court, upon which the moon lies like a cloth of bluish light, on this old dwelling place of nobility which has such an appearance of sleeping, with its roofs torpid under their cowls of snow, there pass through his mind thoughts of the other world.

"What! Suppose now the Nesmonds should come back!"

Just at this moment, the bell rings loud and long. Both halves of the folding doors opened so suddenly, so quickly, that an echo wakes and dies away, and for a few moments, down below in the darkness of the doorway, a confused sound of rustling garments, of whisperings, are heard. There are disputes, eagerness to enter. Just see the valets, hosts of valets, carriages with glass windows glittering in the moonlight, sedan chairs swinging between two torches which flare in the draught of the portal! In no time at all the court is filled. But at the foot of the stairway the confusion ceases. Gentlemen and ladies dismount from the carriages, bow, enter talking, as though they knew the house. On the stairs there is a rustle of silks, a clinking of swords. Nothing but white headdresses, heavy and matted down with powder, nothing but delicate, clear voices, trembling a little, delicate laughter without tones, noiseless steps. All these people appear to be old, old. There are lusterless eyes, jewels bedimmed with sleep, ancient silk brocades softened with changing shades, made by the light of the torches to shine with a gentle glory; and over all this floats a delicate cloud of powder, which arises from the headdresses built up and rolled into puffs, as each one bows — rather stiffly, to be sure, owing to their swords and their enormous panniers. Soon the whole house has the appearance of being filled with people. Torches shine from window to window, mount and descend the old winding stairs. Even the dormer windows of the mansard have their spark of festivity and life. All the Nesmond mansion is illuminated as if a grand burst of sunset glory had kindled its windows.

"Ah, good heavens! they are going to start a fire!" says M. Majesté, and, recovering from his stupor, he tries to shake off the sluggishness of his legs, and hastily descends into the court, where the lackeys have lighted a great bright fire. M. Majesté draws near, he addresses them. The lackeys do not answer him, and continue to whisper among themselves without the least vapor escaping from their lips into the wintry atmosphere of the night. M. Majesté is not satisfied; but one thing reassures him — the great fire which blazes so high and straight is a singular fire, a flame without heat, which shines and does not burn. Calmed on this score, the worthy man remounts the staircase and enters his storerooms.

These storerooms on the first floor must once have been fine



ALPHONSE DAUDET IN HIS STUDY

reception parlors. Flakes of tarnished gilding still glitter in all the corners. Mythological paintings are on the ceiling, surround the mirrors, float above the doors in tints indefinite and somewhat soiled, like the memory of vanished years. Unhappily there are curtains no longer, no longer dry furniture, only baskets, great boxes full of brazen-headed siphons, and the dry branches of an old lilac, which rises black behind the windowpanes. M. Majesté, as he enters, finds his storeroom full of light and society. He bows, but no one heeds him. The ladies on the arms of their escorts continue ceremoniously to simper in their satin pelisses. There is promenading, talking, groups form and break. In sooth, all these old marquises seem to be entirely at home. Before a painted pier glass a little shade starts all of a tremor. "To think that here am I and there am I," and smilingly she gazes at a Diana facing her on the woodwork—delicate and rosy, with a crescent on her brow.

"Nesmond, just come and see your arms!" and every one laughs to see the Nesmond blazon printed on some packing paper with the name of Majesté beneath.

"Ha! ha! ha! So his Majesté is still in France."

Then jests without end, little flutelike sounds of laughter, threatening fingers, simpering lips. All at once some one shouts: "Champagne! champagne!" "No, it is not!" "Yes it is! it is champagne. Come, Countess, quick, a little Rueillon!" It is M. Majesté's seltzer water, which they have taken for champagne. They find it somewhat flat, but oh, they drink it just the same, and as these poor little shades have not very steady heads, by degrees the foaming seltzer water cheers their hearts, excites them, makes them want to dance. They organize minuets. Four delicate violins summoned by Nesmond begin an air of Rameau's all in triplets, thin and melancholy in its vivacity. It is worth while to see all these handsome old folks slowly turning, bowing grandly to the time of the music. Their finery has grown young again, and also their gilt stomachers, their brocade dresses, their diamond-buckled shoes. The panels themselves seem to revive as they hear these ancient tunes. The old mirror fixed in the wall these two centuries also recognizes them, and all scratched and blackened in the corners as it is, it softly kindles, and reflects the figures of the dancers, slightly effaced, to be sure, as if more melancholy by a regret. In the midst of all these refinements, M. Majesté feels that he is in the way. He hides behind a box and gazes

Little by little, however, the daylight approaches. Through the glass doors of the storeroom the courtyard grows white, then the window tops, then a whole side of the salon. In proportion as the light comes, the figures grow dim, confused. Soon M. Majesté sees only two little fiddlers delayed in a corner, and as the day touches them they too evaporate. In the court he still sees, but very vaguely, the shape of a sedan chair, a powdered wig, sown with emeralds, the last sparks of a torch thrown by the lackeys on the pavement, and they mingle with the sparks made by the wheels of an express wagon entering noisily through the open portal.



THE CARVEN NAME.

By SAM. WALTER FOSS.

[SAM. WALTER FOSS, Boston poet, born in 1858, is the author of "Back Country Poems," "Whiffs from Wild Meadows," etc]

I WANDERED in the forest, when
My sated soul had tired of men,
Till to a spreading beech I came,
And on it idly carved my name;
Then lightly threw myself across
A forest couch of fragrant moss,
Where soon I sank in slumber deep
  And softly entered, through the gleam
Of misty porticoes of Sleep,
  The shadowy Palace of a Dream
I dreamed how through the years would grow,
Alternate clothed with leaves and snow,
Through April's tears, October's flame,
The beech tree with the carven name;
And bird and squirrel overhead
Peer down upon my name unread,
While Solitude, upon his throne,
Would reign in silence o'er his own,
Until some hunter with his gun,
O'erwearied by the noonday sun,
Companioned by his panting dog,
Would seat him on some mossy log,
And, glancing up, a glad surprise —
My carven name — would meet his eyes;
And he would see before him wrought
The symbol of a vanished thought,

The vision widens: on mine eye
No longer waves the ripened rye;
But lo! within a playground neat
The schoolhouse of a village street.
The ancient beech before it stands,
Waving abroad yet mightier hands;
And darting warblers from the tree
Pour down their madrigals of glee.
Beneath, the children at their play
Are glad, are jubilant as they.
Ah! long shall memory recall
This daily schoolboy carnival!
To men and matrons, old and gray,
This sport shall seem but yesterday.
For memory casts a rainbow screen
Around the years that intervene
And so the craggy heights of age
  Look down directly on the smooth
Green vales of childhood's heritage —
  The dewy meadow lands of youth!

The schoolboy with his favorite maid
Lingers beneath the ancient shade,
And feels a rapture which the years
With all their laughter and their tears
Can from his memory ne'er remove, —
The rapture of an earliest love!
Dream on beneath the beechen shade,
Gay barefoot boy and laughing maid;
Dream on, nor soon awake to see
Life's stern and cold reality, —
Its tender buds of promise killed,
Its morning visions unfulfilled;
Dream on, nor soon awake to learn
That dead loves never more return!

The vision heightens: I behold,
With silvery spires and domes of gold
Far, far beyond my dazzled eyes,
A city towering to the skies;
And standing 'mid the din and glare
Of traffic's thronging thoroughfare,
The same old carven beech looks down
On all the tumult of the town.
And hurrying merchants pause to mark
The moss-grown letters on its bark;

For many a legend, strange and fair,
And many a story, old and rare,
And tale and song and minstrelsy
Have glorified the ancient tree.
It links the city's swarming brood
With nature's pathless solitude;
And joins an age of bard and sage
With olden ages, coarse and rude.

But see! a light breeze from the farms
Has caught the old tree in its arms;
It falls, and round it in a ring
Men swarm, as fiefs around a king
Who, of life's pageant weary grown,
Falls dying from his tottering throne!
But one is there whose soul-lit eyes
Bear the deep blue of country skies,
A poet, who in all things sees
New meanings and new mysteries;
And near the tree amid the throng,
Outwells from him this artless song:

Enshrined amid the ancient wood,
Long ages gone our beech tree stood,
Unchallenged king of solitude!

In slumberous summers long ago
It felt the woodland breezes blow
And toss its branches to and fro.

It braved a hundred winters' harms,
It mocked the tempest's wild alarms,
And took the whirlwind in its arms;

And beat by storms of snow and rain,
A conscious Titan, in disdain
Defied the pygmy hurricane.

Men spared it for a stranger's name,
Who molders now unknown to fame—
Dust in the dust from whence he came!

And years pass on, and ages roll,
And no man knows where roams the soul
That moved the hand to trace that scroll.

But to return: the other evening, — it happened to be on my last visit to my farmhouse, — when I had exhausted all the ordinary rural topics of thought; had formed all sorts of conjectures as to the income of the year; had planned a new wall around one lot, and the clearing up of another, now covered with patriarchal wood; and wondered if the little rickety house would not be after all a snug enough box to live and to die in — I fell on a sudden into such an unprecedented line of thought, which took such deep hold of my sympathies — sometimes even starting tears — that I determined, the next day, to set as much of it as I could recall on paper.

Something — it may have been the home-looking blaze, (I am a bachelor of — say six and twenty,) or possibly a plaintive cry of the baby in my tenant's room, had suggested to me the thought of — Marriage.

I piled upon the heated firedogs the last armful of my wood; and now, said I, bracing myself courageously between the arms of my chair, — I'll not flinch; — I'll pursue the thought wherever it leads, though it leads me to the d——, (I am apt to be hasty,) — at least, — continued I, softening, — until my fire is out.

The wood was green, and at first showed no disposition to blaze. It smoked furiously. Smoke, thought I, always goes before blaze; and so does doubt go before decision: and my Reverie, from that very starting point, slipped into this shape: —

I. SMOKE — SIGNIFYING DOUBT.

A wife? — thought I; — yes, a wife!

And why?

And pray, my dear sir, why not — why? Why not doubt; why not hesitate; why not tremble?

Does a man buy a ticket in a lottery — a poor man, whose whole earnings go in to secure the ticket — without trembling, hesitating, and doubting?

Can a man stake his bachelor respectability, his independence and comfort, upon the die of absorbing, unchanging, relentless marriage, without trembling at the venture?

Shall a man who has been free to chase his fancies over the wide world, without let or hindrance, shut himself up to marriage-ship, within four walls called Home, that are to claim

him, his time, his trouble, and his tears, thenceforward for evermore, without doubts thick, and thick-coming as Smoke?

Shall he who has been hitherto a mere observer of other men's cares and business — moving off where they made him sick of heart, approaching whenever and wherever they made him gleeful — shall he now undertake administration of just such cares and business, without qualms? Shall he, whose whole life has been but a nimble succession of escapes from trifling difficulties, now broach without doubtings — that Matrimony, where, if difficulty beset him, there is no escape? Shall this brain of mine, careless-working, never tired with idleness, feeding on long vagaries, and high, gigantic castles, dreaming out beatitudes hour by hour — turn itself at length to such dull task work as thinking out a livelihood for wife and children?

Where thenceforward will be those sunny dreams, in which I have warmed my fancies, and my heart, and lighted my eye with crystal? This very marriage, which a brilliant-working imagination has invested time and again with brightness and delight, can serve no longer as a mine for teeming fancy: all, alas, will be gone — reduced to the dull standard of the actual! No more room for intrepid forays of imagination — no more gorgeous realm making — all will be over!

Why not, I thought, go on dreaming?

Can any wife be prettier than an after-dinner fancy, idle and yet vivid, can paint for you? Can any children make less noise than the little rosy-cheeked ones, who have no existence, except in the *omnium gatherum* of your own brain? Can any housewife be more unexceptionable than she who goes sweeping daintily the cobwebs that gather in your dreams? Can any domestic larder be better stocked than the private larder of your head dozing on a cushioned chair back at Delmonico's? Can any family purse be better filled than the exceeding plump one you dream of, after reading such pleasant books as Munchausen or Typee?

But if, after all, it must be — duty, or what not, making provocation — what then? And I clapped my feet hard against the firedogs, and leaned back, and turned my face to the ceiling, as much as to say: — And where on earth, then, shall a poor devil look for a wife?

Somebody says, Lyttleton or Shaftesbury, I think, that "marriages would be happier if they were all arranged by the

Lord Chancellor." Unfortunately we have no Lord Chancellor to make this commutation of our misery.

Shall a man then scour the country on a mule's back, like Honest Gil Blas of Santillane; or shall he make application to some such intervening providence as Madame St. Marc, who, as I see by the *Presse*, manages these matters to one's hand, for some five per cent on the fortunes of the parties?

I have trouted when the brook was so low, and the sky so hot, that I might as well have thrown my fly upon the turnpike; and I have hunted hare at noon, and woodcock in snow time — never despairing, scarce doubting; but for a poor hunter of his kind, without traps or snares, or any aid of police or constabulary, to traverse the world, where are swarming, on a moderate computation, some three hundred and odd millions of unmarried women, for a single capture — irremediable, unchangeable — and yet a capture which by strange metonymy, not laid down in the books, is very apt to turn captor into captive, and make game of hunter — all this, surely, surely may make a man shrug with doubt!

Then — again — there are the plaguy wife's relations. Who knows how many third, fourth, or fifth cousins will appear at careless complimentary intervals long after you had settled into the placid belief that all congratulatory visits were at an end? How many twisted-headed brothers will be putting in their advice, as a friend to Peggy?

How many maiden aunts will come to spend a month or two with their "dear Peggy," and want to know every tea time, "if she isn't a dear love of a wife?" Then, dear father-in-law will beg (taking dear Peggy's hand in his) to give a little wholesome counsel; and will be very sure to advise just the contrary of what you had determined to undertake. And dear mamma-in-law must set her nose into Peggy's cupboard, and insist upon having the key to your own private locker in the wainscot.

Then, perhaps, there is a little bevy of dirty-nosed nephews who come to spend the holidays, and eat up your East India sweetmeats; and who are forever tramping over your head or raising the old Harry below, while you are busy with your clients. Last, and worse, is some fidgety old uncle, forever too cold or too hot, who vexes you with his patronizing airs, and impudently kisses his little Peggy!

—That could be borne, however: for perhaps he has

promised his fortune to Peggy. Peggy, then, will be rich: — (and the thought made me rub my shins, which were now getting comfortably warm upon the firedogs). Then, she will be forever talking of *her* fortune; and pleasantly reminding you on occasion of a favorite purchase,— how lucky that *she* had the means; and dropping hints about economy; and buying very extravagant Paisleys.

She will annoy you by looking over the stock list at breakfast time; and mention quite carelessly to your clients, that she is interested in *such* or such a speculation.

She will be provokingly silent when you hint to a tradesman that you have not the money by you for his small bill; — in short, she will tear the life out of you, making you pay in righteous retribution of annoyance, grief, vexation, shame, and sickness of heart for the superlative folly of "marrying rich."

— But if not rich, then poor. Bah! the thought made me stir the coals; but there was still no blaze. The paltry earnings you are able to wring out of clients by the sweat of your brow will now be all *our* income; you will be pestered for pin money, and pestered with your poor wife's relations. Ten to one, she will stickle about taste — "Sir Visto's" — and want to make this so pretty, and that so charming, if she *only* had the means; and is sure Paul (a kiss) can't deny his little Peggy such a trifling sum, and all for the common benefit.

Then she, for one, means that *her* children shan't go a begging for clothes,— and another pull at the purse. Trust a poor mother to dress her children in finery!

Perhaps she is ugly; — not noticeable at first; but growing on her, and (what is worse) growing faster on you. You wonder why you didn't see that vulgar nose long ago: and that lip — it is very strange, you think, that you ever thought it pretty. And then,— to come to breakfast, with her hair looking as it does, and you not so much as daring to say — "Peggy, *do* brush your hair!" Her foot too — not very bad when decently *chaussée* — but now since she's married she does wear such infernal slippers! And yet for all this, to be prigging up for an hour, when any of my old chums come to dine with me!

"Bless your kind hearts! my dear fellows," said I, thrusting the tongs into the coals, and speaking out loud, as if my voice could reach from Virginia to Paris — "not married yet!"

Perhaps Peggy is pretty enough — only shrewish.

—No matter for cold coffee;—you should have been up before.

What sad, thin, poorly cooked chops, to eat with your rolls'

—She thinks they are very good, and wonders how you can set such an example to your children.

The butter is nauseating.

—She has no other, and hopes you'll not raise a storm about butter a little turned.—I think I see myself—ruminated I—sitting meekly at table, scarce daring to lift up my eyes, utterly fagged out with some quarrel of yesterday, choking down detestably sour muffins, that my wife thinks are "delicious"—slipping in dried mouthfuls of burnt ham off the side of my fork tines,—slipping off my chair sideways at the end, and slipping out with my hat between my knees, to business, and never feeling myself a competent, sound-minded man till the oak door is between me and Peggy!

—"Ha, ha,—not yet!" said I; and in so earnest a tone, that my dog started to his feet—cocked his eye to have a good look into my face—met my smile of triumph with an amiable wag of the tail, and curled up again in the corner.

Again, Peggy is rich enough, well enough, mild enough, only she doesn't care a fig for you. She has married you because father or grandfather thought the match eligible, and because she didn't wish to disoblige them. Besides, she didn't positively hate you, and thought you were a respectable enough young person;—she has told you so repeatedly at dinner. She wonders you like to read poetry; she wishes you would buy her a good cookbook; and insists upon your making your will at the birth of the first baby.

She thinks Captain So-and-So a splendid-looking fellow, and wishes you would trim up a little, were it only for appearance' sake.

You need not hurry up from the office so early at night:—she, bless her dear heart!—does not feel lonely. You read to her a love tale; she interrupts the pathetic parts with directions to her seamstress. You read of marriages: she sighs, and asks if Captain So-and-So has left town! She hates to be mewed up in a cottage, or between brick walls; she does *so* love the Springs!

But, again, Peggy loves you;—at least she swears it, with her hand on the "Sorrows of Werther." She has pin money which she spends for the *Literary World* and the *Friends in Council.*

She is not bad looking, save a bit too much of forehead; nor is she sluttish, unless a *négligé* till three o'clock, and an ink stain on the forefinger, be sluttish; — but then she is such a sad blue!

You never fancied when you saw her buried in a three-volume novel, that it was anything more than a girlish vagary; and when she quoted Latin, you thought innocently that she had a capital memory for her samplers.

But to be bored eternally about Divine Dante and funny Goldoni, is too bad. Your copy of Tasso, a treasure print of 1680, is all bethumbed and dog's-eared, and spotted with baby gruel. Even your Seneca — an Elzevir — is all sweaty with handling. She adores La Fontaine, reads Balzac with a kind of artist scowl, and will not let Greek alone.

You hint at broken rest and an aching head at breakfast, and she will fling you a scrap of Anthology — in lieu of the camphor bottle — or chant the *aiaî aiaî* of tragic chorus.

— The nurse is getting dinner; you are holding the baby; Peggy is reading Bruyère.

The fire smoked thick as pitch, and puffed out little clouds over the chimney-piece. I gave the forestick a kick, at the thought of Peggy, baby, and Bruyère.

— Suddenly the flame flickered bluely athwart the smoke — caught at a twig below — rolled round the mossy oak stick — twined among the crackling tree limbs — mounted — lit up the whole body of smoke, and blazed out cheerily and bright. Doubt vanished with Smoke, and Hope began with Flame.

II. BLAZE — SIGNIFYING CHEER.

I pushed my chair back; drew up another; stretched out my feet cozily upon it, rested my elbows on the chair arms, leaned my head on one hand, and looked straight into the leaping and dancing flame.

— Love is a flame — ruminated I; and (glancing round the room) how a flame brightens up a man's habitation!

"Carlo," said I, calling up my dog into the light, "good fellow, Carlo!" and I patted him kindly, and he wagged his tail, and laid his nose across my knee, and looked wistfully up in my face; then strode away, — turned to look again, and lay down to sleep.

"Pho, the brute!" said I; "it is not enough after all to like a dog."

—If now in that chair yonder, not the one your feet lie upon, but the other, beside you—closer yet—were seated a sweet-faced girl, with a pretty little foot lying out upon the hearth—a bit of lace running round the swelling throat—the hair parted to a charm over a forehead fair as any of your dreams;—and if you could reach an arm around that chair back, without fear of giving offense, and suffer your fingers to play idly with those curls that escape down the neck; and if you could clasp with your other hand those little white, taper fingers of hers, which lie so temptingly within reach,—and so, talk softly and low in presence of the blaze, while the hours slip without knowledge, and the winter winds whistle uncared for;—if, in short, you were no bachelor, but the husband of some such sweet image—(dream, call it rather), would it not be far pleasanter than this cold single night sitting—counting the sticks—reckoning the length of the blaze and the height of the falling snow?

And if some or all of those wild vagaries that grow on your fancy at such an hour, you could whisper into listening, because loving ears—ears not tired with listening, because it is you who whisper—ears ever indulgent because eager to praise;—and if your darkest fancies were lit up, not merely with bright wood fire, but with a ringing laugh of that sweet face turned up in fond rebuke—how far better, than to be waxing black, and sour, over pestilential humors—alone—your very dog asleep!

And if when a glowing thought comes into your brain, quick and sudden, you could tell it over as to a second self, to that sweet creature, who is not away, because she loves to be there; and if you could watch the thought catching that girlish mind, illuming that fair brow, sparkling in those pleasantest of eyes—how far better than to feel it slumbering, and going out, heavy, lifeless, and dead, in your own selfish fancy. And if a generous emotion steals over you—coming, you know not whither, would there not be a richer charm in lavishing it in caress, or endearing word, upon that fondest, and most dear one, than in patting your glossy-coated dog, or sinking lonely to smiling slumbers?

How would not benevolence ripen with such monitor to task it! How would not selfishness grow faint and dull, leaning ever to that second self, which is the loved one! How would not guile shiver, and grow weak, before that girl brow

and eye of innocence! How would not all that boyhood prized of enthusiasm, and quick blood, and life, renew itself in such a presence!

The fire was getting hotter, and I moved into the middle of the room. The shadows the flames made were playing like fairy forms over floor, and wall, and ceiling.

My fancy would surely quicken, thought I, if such being were in attendance. Surely imagination would be stronger, and purer, if it could have the playful fancies of dawning womanhood to delight it. All toil would be torn from mind labor, if but another heart grew into this present soul, quickening it, warming it, cheering it, bidding it ever, — God speed!

Her face would make a halo, rich as a rainbow, atop of all such noisome things as we lonely souls call trouble. Her smile would illumine the blackest of crowding cares; and darkness, that now seats you despondent in your solitary chair for days together, weaving bitter fancies, dreaming bitter dreams, would grow light and thin, and spread, and float away, — chased by that beloved smile.

Your friend — poor fellow! — dies: — never mind, that gentle clasp of *her* fingers, as she steals behind you, telling you not to weep — it is worth ten friends!

Your sister, sweet one, is dead — buried. The worms are busy with all her fairness. How it makes you think earth nothing but a spot to dig graves upon!

— It is more: *she*, she says, will be a sister; and the waving curls as she leans upon your shoulder touch your cheek, and your wet eye turns to meet those other eyes — God has sent his angel, surely!

Your mother, alas for it, she is gone! Is there any bitterness to a youth, alone, and homeless, like this!

But you are not homeless; you are not alone: *she* is there; — her tears softening yours, her smile lighting yours, her grief killing yours; and you live again, to assuage that kind sorrow of hers.

Then — those children, rosy, fair-haired; no, they do not disturb you with their prattle now — they are yours! Toss away there on the greensward — never mind the hyacinths, the snowdrops, the violets, if so be any are there; the perfume of their healthful lips is worth all the flowers of the world. No need now to gather wild bouquets to love and cherish: flower, tree, gun, are all dead things; things livelier hold your soul.

And she, the mother, sweetest and fairest of all, watching, tending, caressing, loving, till your own heart grows pained with tenderest jealousy, and cures itself with loving.

You have no need now of any cold lecture to teach thankfulness: your heart is full of it. No need now, as once, of bursting blossoms, of trees taking leaf, and greenness, to turn thought kindly, and thankfully; forever beside you there is bloom, and ever beside you there is fruit,—for which eye, heart, and soul are full of unknown, and unspoken, because unspeakable, thank offering.

And if sickness catches you, binds you, lays you down—no lonely moanings and wicked curses at careless-stepping nurses. *The* step is noiseless, and yet distinct beside you. The white curtains are drawn, or withdrawn by the magic of that other presence; and the soft, cool hand is upon your brow.

No cold comfortings of friend watchers, merely come in to steal a word away from that outer world which is pulling at their skirts; but, ever, the sad, shaded brow of her whose lightest sorrow for your sake is your greatest grief,—if it were not a greater joy.

The blaze was leaping light and high, and the wood falling under the growing heat.

—So, continued I, this heart would be at length itself;—striving with everything gross, even now as it clings to grossness. Love would make its strength native and progressive. Earth's cares would fly. Joys would double. Susceptibilities be quickened; Love master self; and having made the mastery, stretch onward, and upward toward Infinitude.

And if the end came, and sickness brought that follower—Great Follower—which sooner or later is sure to come after, then the heart, and the hand of Love, ever near, are giving to your tired soul, daily and hourly, lessons of that love which consoles, which triumphs, which circleth all, and centereth in all—Love Infinite and Divine!

Kind hands—none but *hers*—will smooth the hair upon your brow as the chill grows damp and heavy on it; and her fingers—none but hers—will be in yours as the wasted flesh stiffens and hardens for the ground. *Her* tears—you could feel no others, if oceans fell—will warm your drooping features once more to life; once more your eye, lighted in joyous triumph, kindle in her smile, and then——

The fire fell upon the hearth; the blaze gave a last leap—

a flicker — then another — caught a little remaining twig — blazed up — wavered — went out.

There was nothing but a bed of glowing embers, over which the white ashes gathered fast. I was alone with only my dog for company.

III. ASHES — SIGNIFYING DESOLATION.

After all, thought I, ashes follow blaze, inevitably as Death follows Life. Misery treads on the heels of Joy; Anguish rides swift after Pleasure.

"Come to me again, Carlo," said I to my dog; and I patted him fondly once more, but now only by the light of the dying embers.

It is very little pleasure one takes in fondling brute favorites; but it is a pleasure that when it passes leaves no void. It is only a little alleviating redundancy in your solitary heart life, which if lost, another can be supplied.

But if your heart, not solitary — not quieting its humors with mere love of chase, or dog — not repressing, year after year, its earnest yearnings after something better, and more spiritual, — has fairly linked itself, by bonds strong as life, to another heart — is the casting off easy, then?

Is it then only a little heart redundancy cut off, which the next bright sunset will fill up?

And my fancy, as it had painted doubt under the smoke, and cheer under the warmth of the blaze, so now it began under the faint light of the smoldering embers to picture heart desolation.

What kind congratulatory letters, hosts of them, coming from old and half-forgotten friends, now that your happiness is a year, or two years old!

"Beautiful."

— Aye to be sure, beautiful!

"Rich."

— Pho, the dawdler! how little he knows of heart treasure, who speaks of wealth to a man who loves his wife, as a wife only should be loved!

"Young."

— Young indeed; guileless as infancy; charming as the morning.

Ah, these letters bear a sting: they bring to mind, with

new and newer freshness, if it be possible, the value of that which you tremble lest you lose.

How anxiously you watch that step — if it lose not its buoyancy; how you study the color on that cheek, if it grow not fainter; how you tremble at the luster in those eyes, if it be not the luster of Death; how you totter under the weight of that muslin sleeve — a phantom weight! How you fear to do it, and yet press forward, to note if that breathing be quickened, as you ascend the home heights, to look off on the sunset lighting the plain.

Is your sleep quiet sleep, after that she has whispered to you her fears, and in the same breath — soft as a sigh, sharp as an arrow — bidden you bear it bravely?

Perhaps, — the embers were now glowing fresher, a little kindling, before the ashes — she triumphs over disease.

But Poverty, the world's almoner, has come to you with ready, spare hand.

Alone, with your dog living on bones, and you on hope — kindling each morning, dying slowly each night, — this could be borne. Philosophy would bring home its stories to the lone man. Money is not in his hand, but Knowledge is in his brain! and from that brain he draws out faster, as he draws slower from his pocket. He remembers: and on remembrance he can live for days and weeks. The garret, if a garret covers him, is rich in fancies. The rain, if it pelts, pelts only him used to rain pelting. And his dog crouches not in dread, but in companionship. His crust he divides with him, and laughs. He crowns himself with glorious memories of Cervantes, though he begs: if he nights it under the stars, he dreams heaven-sent dreams of the prisoned and homeless Galileo.

He hums old sonnets, and snatches of poor Jonson's plays. He chants Dryden's odes, and dwells on Otway's rhyme. He reasons with Bolingbroke or Diogenes, as the humor takes him; and laughs at the world: for the world, thank Heaven, has left him alone!

Keep your money, old misers, and your palaces, old princes, — the world is mine!

I care not, Fortune, what you me deny. —
   You cannot rob me of free nature's grace,
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
   You cannot bar my constant feet to trace

The woods and lawns, by living streams, at eve;
Let health my nerves and finer fibers brace,
And I, their toys, to the great children, leave,
Of Fancy, Reason, Virtue, naught can me bereave!

But — if not alone?

If *she* is clinging to you for support, for consolation, for home, for life — she, reared in luxury perhaps, is faint for bread?

Then the iron enters the soul; then the nights darken under any sky light. Then the days grow long, even in the solstice of winter.

She may not complain; what then?

Will your heart grow strong, if the strength of her love can dam up the fountains of tears, and the tied tongue not tell of bereavement? Will it solace you to find her parting the poor treasure of food you have stolen for her, with begging, foodless children?

But this ill, strong hands, and Heaven's help, will put down. Wealth again; flowers again; patrimonial acres again; Brightness again. But your little Bessy, your favorite child, is pining.

Would to God! you say in agony, that wealth could bring fullness again into that blanched cheek, or round those little thin lips once more; but it cannot. Thinner and thinner they grow; plaintive and more plaintive her sweet voice.

"Dear Bessy" — and your tones tremble; you feel that she is on the edge of the grave. Can you pluck her back? Can endearments stay her? Business is heavy, away from the loved child; home you go, to fondle while yet time is left — but *this* time you are too late. She is gone. She cannot hear you: she cannot thank you for the violets you put within her stiff white hand.

And then — the grassy mound — the cold shadow of the headstone!

The wind, growing with the night, is rattling at the window panes, and whistles dismally. I wipe a tear, and in the interval of my Reverie thank God that I am no such mourner.

But gayety, snail-footed, creeps back to the household. All is bright again: —

The violet bed's not sweeter
Than the delicious breath marriage sends forth.

Her lip is rich and full; her cheek delicate as a flower. Her frailty doubles your love.

And the little one she clasps — frail too — too frail: the boy you had set your hopes and heart on. You have watched him growing, ever prettier, ever winning more and more upon your soul. The love you bore to him when he first lisped names — your name and hers — has doubled in strength now that he asks innocently to be taught of this or that, and promises you by that quick curiosity that flashes in his eye a mind full of intelligence.

And some hairbreadth escape by sea or flood, that he perhaps may have had — which unstrung your soul to such tears as you pray God may be spared you again — has endeared the little fellow to your heart a thousandfold.

And now, with his pale sister in the grave, all *that* love has come away from the mound, where worms feast, and centers on the boy.

How you watch the storms lest they harm him! How often you steal to his bed late at night, and lay your hand lightly upon the brow, where the curls cluster thick, rising and falling with the throbbing temples, and watch, for minutes together, the little lips half-parted, and listen — your ear close to them — if the breathing be regular and sweet!

But the day comes — the night rather — when you can catch no breathing.

Aye, put your hair away, — compose yourself, — listen again.

No, there is nothing!

Put your hand now to his brow — damp indeed — but not with healthful night sleep; it is not your hand, no, do not deceive yourself — it is your loved boy's forehead that is so cold; and your loved boy will never speak to you again — never play again — he is dead!

Oh, the tears — the tears, what blessed things are tears! Never fear now to let them fall on his forehead, or his lip, lest you waken him! — Clasp him — clasp him harder — you cannot hurt, you cannot waken him! Lay him down, gently or not, it is the same; he is stiff; he is stark and cold.

But courage is elastic; it is our pride. It recovers itself easier, thought I, than these embers will get into blaze again.

But courage, and patience, and faith, and hope have their limit. Blessed be the man who escapes such trial as will determine limit!

To a lone man it comes not near; for how can trial take hold where there is nothing by which to try?

A funeral? You reason with philosophy. A graveyard? You read Hervey and muse upon the wall. A friend dies? You sigh, you pat your dog,—it is over. Losses? You retrench—you light your pipe—it is forgotten. Calumny? You laugh—you sleep.

But with that childless wife clinging to you in love and sorrow—what then?

Can you take down Seneca now, and coolly blow the dust from the leaf tops? Can you crimp your lip with Voltaire? Can you smoke idly, your feet dangling with the ivies, your thoughts all waving fancies upon a churchyard wall—a wall that borders the grave of your boy?

Can you amuse yourself by turning stinging Martial into rhyme? Can you pat your dog, and seeing him wakeful and kind, say, "It is enough"? Can you sneer at calumny, and sit by your fire dozing?

Blessed, thought I again, is the man who escapes such trial as will measure the limit of patience and the limit of courage!

But the trial comes:—colder and colder were growing the embers.

That wife, over whom your love broods, is fading. Not beauty fading;—that, now that your heart is wrapped in her being, would be nothing.

She sees with quick eyes your dawning apprehension, and she tries hard to make that step of hers elastic.

Your trials and your loves together have centered your affections. They are not now as when you were a lone man, widespread and superficial. They have caught from domestic attachments a finer tone and touch. They cannot shoot out tendrils into barren world soil and suck up thence strengthening nutriment. They have grown under the forcing glass of home roof, they will not now bear exposure.

You do not now look men in the face as if a heart bond was linking you—as if a community of feeling lay between. There is a heart bond that absorbs all others; there is a community that monopolizes your feeling. When the heart lay wide open, before it had grown upon and closed around particular objects, it could take strength and cheer from a hundred connections that now seem colder than ice.

And now those particular objects—alas for you!—are failing.

What anxiety pursues you! How you struggle to fancy—there is no danger; how she struggles to persuade you—there is no danger!

How it grates now on your ear—the toil and turmoil of the city! It was music when you were alone; it was pleasant even, when from the din you were elaborating comforts for the cherished objects;—when you had such sweet escape as evening drew on.

Now it maddens you to see the world careless while you are steeped in care. They hustle you in the street; they smile at you across the table; they bow carelessly over the way; they do not know what canker is at your heart.

The undertaker comes with his bill for the dead boy's funeral. He knows your grief; he is respectful. You bless him in your soul. You wish the laughing street goers were all undertakers.

Your eye follows the physician as he leaves your house: is he wise? you ask yourself; is he prudent? is he the best? Did he never fail—is he never forgetful?

And now the hand that touches yours, is it no thinner—no whiter than yesterday? Sunny days come when she revives; color comes back; she breathes freer; she picks flowers; she meets you with a smile: hope lives again.

But the next day of storm she is fallen. She cannot talk even; she presses your hand.

You hurry away from business before your time. What matter for clients—who is to reap the rewards? What matter for fame—whose eye will it brighten? What matter for riches—whose is the inheritance?

You find her propped with pillows; she is looking over a little picture book bethumbed by the dear boy she has lost. She hides it in her chair; she has pity on you.

—Another day of revival, when the spring sun shines, and flowers open out of doors; she leans on your arm, and strolls into the garden where the first birds are singing. Listen to them with her;—what memories are in bird songs! You need not shudder at her tears—they are tears of Thanksgiving. Press the hand that lies light upon your arm, and you, too, thank God, while yet you may!

You are early home—mid afternoon. Your step is not light: it is heavy, terrible.

They have sent for you.

She is lying down; her eyes half closed; her breathing long and interrupted.

She hears you; her eye opens; you put your hand in hers; yours trembles; — hers does not. Her lips move, it is your name.

"Be strong," she says, "God will help you!"

She presses harder your hand: — "Adieu!"

A long breath — another; — you are alone again. No tears now, poor man! You cannot find them!

— Again home early. There is a smell of varnish in your house. A coffin is there; they have clothed the body in decent graveclothes, and the undertaker is screwing down the lid, slipping round on tiptoe. Does he fear to waken her?

He asks you a simple question about the inscription upon the plate, rubbing it with his coat cuff. You look him straight in the eye; you motion to the door; you dare not speak.

He takes up his hat and glides out stealthful as a cat.

The man has done his work well for all. It is a nice coffin — a very nice coffin! Pass your hand over it — how smooth!

Some sprigs of mignonette are lying carelessly in a little gilt-edged saucer. She loved mignonette.

It is a good stanch table the coffin rests on; — it is your table; you are a housekeeper — a man of family!

Aye, of family! — keep down outcry, or the nurse will be in. Look over at the pinched features; is this all that is left of her? And where is your heart now? No, don't thrust your nails into your hands, nor mangle your lip, nor grate your teeth together. If you could only weep!

— Another day. The coffin is gone out. The stupid mourners have wept — what idle tears! She, with your crushed heart, has gone out!

Will you have pleasant evenings at your home now?

Go into the parlor that your prim housekeeper has made comfortable with clean hearth and blaze of sticks.

Sit down in your chair; there is another velvet-cushioned one over against yours — empty. You press your fingers on your eyeballs as if you would press out something that hurt the brain; but you cannot. Your head leans upon your hand; your eye rests upon the flashing blaze.

Ashes always come after blaze.

Go now into the room where she was sick — softly, lest the prim housekeeper come after.

They have put new dimity upon her chair; they have hung new curtains over the bed. They have removed from the stand its phials, and silver bell; they have put a little vase of flowers in their place; the perfume will not offend the sick sense now. They have half opened the window, that the room so long closed may have air. It will not be too cold.

She is not there.

— Oh, God! — thou who dost temper the wind to the shorn lamb — be kind!

The embers were dark; I stirred them, there was no sign of life. My dog was asleep. The clock in my tenant's chamber had struck one.

I dashed a tear or two from my eyes; — how they came there I know not. I half ejaculated a prayer of thanks, that such desolation had not yet come nigh me; and a prayer of hope — that it might never come.

In a half hour more, I was sleeping soundly. My Reverie was ended.



ROSE AYLMER.

By WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Ah what avails the sceptered race,
  Ah what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
  Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
  May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
  I consecrate to thee.

ESSAYS FROM "BELCARO."[1]

By VERNON LEE

[Vernon Lee is the pseudonym of Violet Paget, an English essayist, born in 1856 She has lived for many years in Florence, Italy, and has written several volumes on art, literature, and general æsthetics, — notably "Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy," "Euphorion," "Renaissance Fancies and Studies"; a life of the Countess of Albany She is also the author of "The Hidden Door," "A Phantom Lover," "Vanitas," and other stories]

Orpheus and Eurydice.

THE LESSON OF A BAS-RELIEF.

No Greek myth has a greater charm for our mind than that of Orpheus and Eurydice. In the first place, we are told by mythologists that it is a myth of the dawn, one of those melancholy, subdued interpretations of the eternal, hopeless separation of the beautiful light of dawn and the beautiful light of day, which forms the constantly recurring tragedy of nature, as the tremendous struggle between light and darkness forms her never-ending epic, her Iliad and Nibelungenlied. There is more of the purely artistic element in these myths of the dawn than in the sun myths. Those earliest poets, primitive peoples, were interested spectators of the great battle between day and night. The sun hero was truly their Achilles, their Siegfried. In fighting, he fought for them. When he chained up the powers of darkness the whole earth was hopeful and triumphant; when he sank down dead, a thousand dark, vague, hideous monsters were let loose on the world, filling men's hearts with sickening terror; the solar warfare was waged for and against men. The case is quite different with respect to the dawn tragedy. If men were moved by that, it was from pure, disinterested sympathy. The dawn and the day were equally good and equally beautiful; the day loved the dawn, since it pursued her so closely, and the dawn must have loved the day in return, since she fled so slowly and reluctantly. Why, then, were they forbidden ever to meet? What mysterious fate condemned the one to die at the touch of the other — the beloved to elude the lover, the lover to kill the beloved? This sad, sympathizing question, which the primitive peoples repeated vaguely and perhaps scarce consciously, day after day,

[1] By permission of Mr T Fisher Unwin (Cr 8vo cloth, Price 5s)

century after century, at length received an answer. One answer, then another, then yet another, as fancy took more definite shapes. Yes, the dawn and the morning are a pair of lovers over whom hangs an irresistible, inscrutable fate—Cephalus and Procris, Alcestis and Admetus, Orpheus and Eurydice.

And this myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is, to our mind, the most charming of the tales born of that beautiful, disinterested sympathy for the dawn and the morning, the one in which the subdued, mysterious pathos of its origin is most perfectly preserved; in which no fault of infidelity or jealousy, no final remission of doom, breaks the melancholy unity of the story. In it we have the real equivalent of that gentle, melancholy fading away of light into light, of tint into tint. Orpheus loses Eurydice as the day loses the dawn, because he loves her; she has issued from Hades as the dawn has issued from darkness; she melts away beneath her lover's look even as the dawn vanishes beneath the look of the day.

The origin of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is beautiful; the myth itself, as evolved by spontaneous poetry, is still more so, and more beautiful still are the forms which have successively been lent it by the poet, the sculptor, and the musician. Its own charm adds to that of its embodiments, and the charm of its embodiments adds in return to its own; a complete circle of beautiful impressions, whose mysterious, linked power it is impossible to withstand. The first link in the chain are those lines of Virgil's, for which we would willingly give ten Æneids, those grandly simple lines, half hidden in the sweet luxuriance of the fourth book of the "Georgics," as the exquisitely chiseled fragment of some sylvan altar might lie half hidden among the long grasses and flowers, beneath the flowering bays and dark ilexes, broken shadows of boughs and yellow gleams of sunlight flickering fantastically across the clear and supple forms of the sculptured marble. "And already upwards returning, he had escaped all mishaps, and the given-back Eurydice was coming into the upper air, walking behind him, for Proserpina had made this condition. When, of a sudden, a madness seized on the unwily lover—pardonable, surely, if ghosts but knew how to pardon. He stood, and back on his Eurydice, already in our sunlight, he looked, forgetful, alas! and broken of will. Then was all the work undone, broken was the compact with the unkind lord, and vainly had he thrice

heard the waters of hell sounding. Then she—'What madness has ruined me, wretched one, and thee, also, Orpheus? For I am called by the cruel Fates to return, and sleep closes my swimming eyes. So, farewell. I am borne away muffled in thick night, stretching forth to thee (alas, thine no longer!) my helpless hands.' She spoke, and from his sight suddenly, even as thin smoke mingles with air, disappeared; nor him, vainly clasping the shadows, and many things wishing to say, did she see again." These lines suggest a bas-relief to us, because a real bas-relief is really connected with them in our mind, and this connection led to a curious little incident in our æsthetic life, which is worth narrating. The bas-relief in question is a sufficiently obscure piece of Greek workmanship, one of those mediocre, much degraded works of art with which Roman galleries abound, and among which, though left unnoticed by the crowd that gathers round the Apollo, or the Augustus, or the Discobolus, we may sometimes divine a repetition of some great lost work of antiquity, some feeble reflection of lost perfection. It is let into the wall of a hall of the Villa Albani, where people throng past it in search of the rigid, pseudo-Attic Antinous And it is as simple as the verses of Virgil: merely three figures slightly raised out of the flat, blank background, Eurydice between Orpheus and Hermes. The three figures stand distinctly apart and in a row. Orpheus touches Eurydice's veil, and her hand rests on his shoulder, while the other hand, drooping supine, is grasped by Hermes. There is no grouping, no embracing, no violence of gesture—nay, scarcely any gesture at all; yet for us there is in it a whole drama, the whole pathos of Virgil's lines. Eurydice has returned, she is standing beneath our sun—*jam luce sub ipsa*—but for the last time. Orpheus lets his lyre sink, his head drooping towards her—*multa volens dicere*—and holds her veil, speechless. Eurydice, her head slightly bent, raises her eyes full upon him. In that look is her last long farewell:—

Jamque vale, feror ingenti circumdata nocte,
Invalidas tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas.

Behind Eurydice stands Hermes, the sad though youthful messenger of the dead. He gently takes her hand; it is time; he would fain stay and let the parting be delayed forever, but he cannot. Come, we must go. Eurydice feels it; she is

looking for the last time at Orpheus, her head and step are prepared to turn away—*jamque vale.* Truly this sad, sympathizing messenger of Hades is a beautiful thought, softening the horror of the return to death.

And we look up again at the bas-relief, the whole story of Orpheus laying firmer hold of our imagination; but as our eyes wander wistfully over the marble, they fall, for the first time, upon a scrap of paper pasted at the bottom of it, a wretched, unsightly, scarce legible rag, such as insult some of the antiques in this gallery, and on it is written: "Antiope coi figli Anfione e Zeto." A sudden, perplexed wonder fills our mind—wonder succeeded by amusement. The bunglers, why, they must have glued the wrong label on the bas-relief. Of course! and we turn out the number of the piece in the catalogue, the solemn, portly catalogue—full of references to Fea, and Visconti, and Winckelmann. Number—yes, here it is, here it is. What, again?

"Antiope urging her sons, Amphion and Zethus, to avenge her by the murder of Dirce."

We put down the catalogue in considerable disgust. What, they don't see that that is Orpheus and Eurydice! They dare, those soulless pedants, to call *that* Antiope with Amphion and Zethus! Ah!—and with smothered indignation we leave the gallery. Passing through the little ilex copse near the villa, the colossal bust of Winckelmann meets our eyes, the heavy, clear-featured, strong-browed head of him who first revealed the world of ancient art. And such profanation goes on, as it were, under his eyes, in that very Villa Albani which he so loved, where he first grew intimate with the antique! What would he have said to such heartless obtuseness?

We have his great work, the work which no amount of additional learning can ever supersede, because no amount of additional learning will ever enable us to feel antique beauty more keenly and profoundly than he made us feel it—we have his great work on our shelf, and as soon as we are back at home, our mind still working on Orpheus and Eurydice, we take it down and search for a reference to our bas-relief. We search all through the index in vain; then turn over the pages where it may possibly be mentioned, again in vain; no Orpheus and Eurydice. Ah! "A bas-relief at the Villa Albani"—let us see what that may be. "A bas-relief," etc., etc.—horror beyond words! The bas-relief—our bas-relief—deliber-

ately set down as Antiope with Amphion and Zethus—set down as Antiope with Amphion and Zethus, by Winckelmann himself!

Yes, and he gravely states his reasons for so doing. The situation is evidently one of great hesitation; there is reluctance on the one hand, persuasion on the other. Moreover, the female figure is that of a mourner, of a supplicant, draped and half veiled as it is; the figure with the lyre, in the Thracian or Thessalian costume, must necessarily be Amphion, while the other, in the loose tunic of a shepherd, must as evidently be his brother, Zethus; and if we put together these facts, we cannot but conclude that the subject of the bas-relief is, as previously stated, Antiope persuading Amphion and Zethus to avenge her on Dirce.

The argument is a good one, there can be no denying it, although it is very strange that Winckelmann should not have perceived that the bas-relief represented Orpheus and Eurydice. But, after all, we ask ourselves, as the confusion in our minds gradually clears up: how do we know that this *is* Orpheus and Eurydice, and not Antiope and her sons? How! and the answer rises up indignantly, Because we see to the contrary; because we know that it must be Orpheus and Eurydice; because we feel morally persuaded that it is. But a doubt creeps up. We are morally convinced, but whence this conviction? Did we come to the bas-relief not knowing what it was, and did we then cry out, overcome by its internal evidence, that it must represent Orpheus and Eurydice? Did we ourselves examine and weigh the evidence as Winckelmann did? And we confess to ourselves that we did none of these things. But how, then, explain this intense conviction, and the emotion awakened in us by the bas-relief? Yet that emotion was genuine; and now we have, little by little, to own that we had read in a book, by M. Charles Blanc, that such and such a bas-relief at the Villa Albani represented Orpheus and Eurydice, and that we had accepted the assertion blindly, unscrutinizingly, and coming to the bas-relief with that idea, did not dream of examining into its truth. And did we not then let our mind wander off from the bas-relief to the story of Orpheus, and make a sort of variation on Virgil's poem, and mistake all this for the impression received from the bas-relief itself? May this not be the explanation of our intense conviction? It seems as if it were so. We have not only lost our sentimental pleasure in the bas-relief,

drooping hand. There is, however, the additional circumstance that one of the men holds a lyre and is dressed in loose trousers and miterlike headdress, while the other man wears only a short tunic, leaving the arms and legs bare, and his head is uncovered and shows closely cut curly locks, the woman being entirely draped, and her head partially covered with a veil. Now, we know that this costume of trousers and miter-shaped head gear was that of certain semi-barbarous peoples connected with the Greeks, amongst others the Thracians and Phrygians, while the simple tunic and the close-cut locks were distinctive of Hellenic youths, especially those admitted to gymnastic training. Moreover, we happen to know that Orpheus was a Thracian, and that Hermes on the other hand, although in one capacity conductor of the souls to Hades, was also the patron divinity of the Greek ephebi of the youths engaged in gymnastic exercises. Now, if we put together these several facts, we perceive great likelihood of these two figures — the one in the dress of a barbarian, which Orpheus is known to have been, and holding a lyre, which Orpheus is known to have played, and the other in the dress of a Greek ephebus, which Hermes is known to have worn — of these two figures really being intended for Orpheus and Hermes. At the same time, we must recollect that Amphion also is known to have worn this barbaric costume and to have played the lyre, while his brother, Zethus, is equally known to have worn the habit of the ephebus; so that Winckelmann has quite as good grounds for his assertion as we have for ours. If only the sculptor had taken the trouble to give the figure in the tunic a pair of winged sandals or a caduceus, or a winged cap, then there could remain no doubt of his being Hermes, for it is a positive fact that no one except Hermes ever had these attributes; the doubt is owing to the choice of insufficiently definite and distinctive peculiarities. But it now strikes us: all this is founded upon the supposition that we know that the barbarians wore trousers and miters, that Orpheus was a sort of barbarian, that Greek ephebi wore tunics and short-cut hair, that Hermes was a sort of ephebus, that, moreover, he was a conductor of souls; now, supposing we knew none or only some of these facts, which we certainly should not, if classical dictionaries had not taught them us, how could we argue that this is Orpheus and that Hermes? Is the meaning of a work of Art to depend on Lemprière and Dr. William Smith? At that rate the sculptor might as well

As we look up perplexedly at the bas-relief, which, after having been as confused, has now become well-nigh as blank as our mind, we are startled by hearing our name from a well-known voice behind us. A young painter stands by our side, a creature knowing or thinking very little beyond his pencils and brushes, serenely unconscious of literature and science in his complete devotion to art. A few trivial sentences are exchanged, during which we catch our friend's eye glancing at the bas-relief. "I never noticed that before," he remarks. "Do you know, I like it better than anything else in this room. Strange that I should not have noticed it before."

"It is a very interesting work," we answer; adding, with purposely feigned decision, "Of course you see that it represents Orpheus and Eurydice, not Antiope and her sons."

The painter, whose instinctive impression on the point we have thus tried to elicit, seems wholly unmoved by this remark; the fact literally passes across his mind without in the least touching it.

"Does it? Ah, what a splendid mass of drapery! That grand, round fold and those small, fine vertical ones. I should like to make a sketch of that."

A sort of veil seems suddenly to fall off our mental eyes; these simple, earnest words, this intense admiration, seem to have shed new light into our mind.

This fellow, who knows or cares apparently nothing whatever about either Orpheus or Antiope, has not found the bas-relief a blank; it has spoken for him, the clear, unmistakable language of lines and curves, of light and shade, a language needing no interpreters, no dictionaries; and it has told him the fact, the fact depending on no previous knowledge, irrefutable and eternal, that it is beautiful. And as our eyes follow his, and we listen to his simple, unaffected, unpoetical exclamations of admiration at this combination of lines, or that bend of a limb, we recognize that if poetry has its unchangeable effects, its power which, in order to be felt, requires only the comprehension of words; art also has its unchangeable effects, its power, its supreme virtue, which all can feel who have eyes and minds that can see. The bas-relief does not necessarily tell us the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, as Virgil's lines do, that is not inherent in its nature as in theirs; but it tells us the fact of its beauty, and that fact is vital, eternal, and indissolubly connected with it.

To appreciate a work of art means, therefore, to appreciate that work of art itself, as distinguished from appreciating something outside it, something accidentally or arbitrarily connected with it; to appreciate Virgil's lines means to appreciate his telling of the story of Orpheus, his choice of words and his meter; to appreciate the bas-relief means to appreciate the combination of forms and lights and shades; and a person who cared for Virgil's lines because they suggested the bas-relief or for the bas-relief because it suggested Virgil's lines, would equally be appreciating neither, since his pleasure depended on something separate from the work of art itself.

Yet this is what constantly happens, and happens on account of two very simple and legitimate movements of the mind: that of comparison and that of association. Let us examine what we have called, for want of a more definite word, the movement of comparison. You are enjoying a work of art, plastic and musical; what you enjoy is the work of art itself, the combination of lines, lights and shades and colors in the one case, the combination of modulations and harmonies in the other; now, as this enjoyment means merely the pleasing activity of your visual and æsthetic, or acoustic and æsthetic, organism, you instinctively wish to increase the activity in order to increase the pleasure; the increase of activity is obtained by approximating as much as possible to the creative activity of the original artist, by going over every step that he has gone over, by creating the work of art over again in the intensity of appreciation. If it be a plastic work, you produce your pencil and brushes and copy it; if it be a musical composition, you try to reproduce it by means of your voice or your instrument; and you thus obtain the highest degree of æsthetical activity and pleasure compatible with mere appreciation. But supposing you can neither draw, nor sing, nor play; supposing you have only another set of faculties, those dealing with thoughts and images, those of the artist in words, of the writer. How will you obtain that high degree of æsthetical activity, how will you go over the steps of the original creator? You will find that words cannot copy the work of art, plastic or musical; that lines and lights and shades, or modulations and harmonies, must be seen or heard to be appreciated; that, in short, you have no means of absolutely reproducing what you have seen or heard;—instinctively, unintentionally, unconsciously, you will seek for an equivalent for it; you will try and produce

with the means at your disposal something analogous to the work of art, you will obtain your æsthetic activity from another set of faculties; not being able to draw or to sing, you will think and feel, and, in default of producing a copy, you will produce an equivalent. But the same result is not obtainable by different means; a painter, copying a statue, will produce not a statue but a picture; a sculptor copying a picture will produce a model, not a sketch; yet the difference between the *modus operandi* of painting and sculpture is as nothing compared with that betweeen the *modus operandi* of art which appeals to the eye or the ear, and art which appeals direct to the mind; of art which deals with visible or audible shapes, and of art which deals with purely abstract thoughts and images. How much greater, then, must not also be the difference in the result! Instead of a statue you have, not a picture, but a poem, a work of art of totally different nature from the one which you originally tried to reproduce. Instead of visual or audible forms, you have feelings and fancies; and if you compare your equivalent with the original work of art you will probably find that it has little in common with it: you had seen a beautifully chiseled head, and you say that you had perceived a beautiful emotion; you had heard a lovely modulation, and you have written that you witnessed a pathetic parting; instead of your eye and your ear, your imagination and feeling have been active, and the product of their activity is a special, separate one. So, in your desire to appreciate a work of art, you have, after a fashion, created a new one, good or bad, and having created it, there are a hundred chances against one that you will henceforward perceive your creation and not the original work; that you will no longer perceive lines or sounds, but fancies and feelings, in short, that instead of appreciating the work of art itself, you will appreciate merely your intellectual equivalent of it, that is to say, something which most distinctly and emphatically is *not* the work of art.

The process of association is even commoner: you have taken interest in some story, or some form, your mind has worked upon it; you are shown a work of art whose name, often nothing more, connects it with this story or poem, and your thoughts being full of the latter, you apply to the work of art the remarks you had made about the story or poem; you see in the work of art the details of that story or poem; you

look at it as a mere illustration; very often you do not look at it at all; for although your bodily eyes may be fixed on the picture or statue, your intellectual eyes are busy with some recollection or impression in your mind; it is the case of the bas-relief of the Villa Albani, of the pleasure received from Virgil's lines being reawakened by the mere circumstance of the bas-relief being called, rightly or wrongly, Orpheus and Eurydice; it is the story of a hundred interpretations of works of art, of people seeing a comic expression in a certain group at the Villa Ludovisi because they imagined it to represent Papirius and his mother, while other people found the same group highly tragic, because they fancied it represented Electra and Orestes; it is the old story of violent emotion, attributed to wholly unemotional music, because the words to which it is arbitrarily connected happen to be pathetic; the endless story of delusions of all sorts, of associations of feelings and ideas as accidental as those which make certain tunes or sights depress us because we happened to be in a melancholy mood when we first saw or heard them.

What becomes of the real, inherent effect of the work of art itself in the midst of such concatenations of fancies and associations? How can we listen to its own magic speech, its language of lines and colors and sounds, when our mind is full of confused voices telling us of different and irrelevant things? Where, at such times, is our artistic appreciation, and what is it worth? Should we then, if such a thing were possible, forbid such comparisons, such associations? Should we voluntarily deprive ourselves of all such pleasure as is not given by the work of art itself?

No, but we should restrain such impressions; we should, as far as we can, remain conscious of the fact that they are mere effects of comparison and association, that they are not the work of art, but something distinct from it, and that the work of art itself exists in the lines, tints, lights and shades of the picture or statue, in the modulations and harmonies of a composition, and that all the rest is gratuitously added by ourselves. Nay, we should remember that there could not even have been that very comparison, that very association, if there had been no previous real artistic perception; that unless we had first cared for Virgil's Orpheus for its own sake, we could not afterwards have cared for the bas-relief on its account.

We confess that we have ourselves become instinctively

jealous of such foreign causes of pleasure in art, jealous because we have been pained by their constant encroachment; the feeling may be an exaggerated one, but it is a natural reaction. We have thus caught ourselves almost regretting that pictures should have any subjects; we have sometimes felt that the adaptation of music to the drama is a sort of profanation; and all this because we have too often observed that the subject seemed to engross so much attention as to make people forget the picture, and that the drama made people misinterpret the music; and that criticism itself, instead of checking this tendency, has done much to further it. Yes, critics, grave and emphatic thinkers, have spoken as if the chief merit of the painter had consisted in clearly expressing some story, which in all probability was not worth expressing, some dull monkish legend which his genius alone could render tolerable; as if the chief aim of the composer were to follow the mazes of some wretched imbecile libretto, which has become endurable thanks only to his notes; as if the immortal were to be chained to the mortal, and mediocrity, inferiority, mere trumpery fact or trumpery utility were to bridle and bestride the divine hippogriff of art, and, like another Astolfo, fly up on its back into the regions of immortality. Artists themselves have been of this way of thinking,—we cannot say of feeling, for, as long as they were true artists, their instinctive feelings must have propelled them in a very different direction. Gluck, that great dramatist, who was greatest when least dramatic, thought that music was made for the sake of the drama, that its greatest glory was to express the difference, as he himself wrote, between a princess and a waiting maid, between a Spartan and a Phrygian, to follow the steps of a play as its humble retainer and commentator. Gluck composed his music for the sake of the dramas; but, O irony of art! the dramas are recollected only for the sake of his music. Let the artist be humble, mistrustful of his own art, let him believe it to be subservient to something outside it, devote it magnanimously to some purpose of utility, or some expression of fact, sacrifice it throughout; it will be all in vain; if his work be excellent, it will subordinate all to itself, it will swallow up every other interest, throw into the shade every other utility.

One day the Pope's banker, Agostino Chigi, came to Master Rafael of Urbino, and said to him—"I am building a little pleasure villa in which to entertain my friends. Baldassare

Peruzzi has made the plans, Sebastiano del Piombo has designed the arabesques, Nanni da Udine will paint me the garlands of fruit and flowers; it must be perfection. You shall paint me the walls of the open hall looking out on the Tiber, that it may be a fit place wherein to sup and make merry with popes and cardinals and princes." "Very good," answered Rafael.

The object was to obtain a dining hall, and the fresco was to be there merely as an ornament; but Rafael painted his Galatea, and behold, the hall could no longer be used as a dining room; every one crowded into it to see the fresco; the hall has now become a gallery, and the real property, less of its owners, who cannot make use of it, than of the whole world, who insist on entering it; the room now exists only for the sake of the fresco, yet the fresco was originally intended to exist only for it. This is the inevitable course of art; we call in beauty as a servant, and see, like some strange demon, it becomes the master; it may answer our call, but we have to do its bidding. . . .

We have said much against the common tendency towards transporting on to a work of art an interest not originally due to it, because, by this means, we are apt to lose the interest which does belong to the work of art. But, if only each could get its due, each exert its power unimpaired, there could be nothing more delightful than thus to enjoy the joint effect of several works of art; not, according to the notion of certain æsthetic visionaries — who do not see that singers cannot be living Greek statues nor librettists poets, nor scene painters Poussins — in one clumsy ambiguous monster spectacle, but in our minds, in our fancy; if, conscious of the difference between them, we could unite in one collection the works of various arts: people the glades and dingles of Keats with the divinities we have seen in marble, play upon the reed of the Praxitelian Faun the woodland melodies of Mozart's "Tamino." It would thus be the highest reward for self-scrutinizing æsthetic humility, for honest appreciation of each art for itself, for brave sacrifice of our own artistic whimsies and vanities, to enable us to bring up simultaneously the recollection of Virgil's nobly pathetic lines, of the exquisitely simple and supple forms of the bas-relief, of the grand and tender music of Gluck, and to unite them in one noble pageant of the imagination, evoked by the spell of those two names: Orpheus and Eurydice.